



SCENES

FROM

THE RAMAYAN

ETC

BY

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PRINCIPAL OF THE BENARES COLLEGE

BHARATIYA PUBLISHING HOUSE  
DELHI (INDIA) VARANASI

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The history and the philosophy of antiquity are invaluable and could ill be spared but its poetry is what makes the ancient world near of kin to us, and is that by which we feel that the men of old were bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. The poetry of a race is what redeems it from perishing as a race and immortalizes not only the individual poet but the men who first loved his song and were gladdened by it. This is what binds together the hearts of the ancient and modern worlds.

*Saturday Review*



TO MY DEAR FRIEND

S A Y

I inscribe this little book



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	ix
AYODHYA	1
RAVAN DOOMED	7
THE BIRTH OF RAJA	13
THE HEIR APPARENT	20
MANTHARA'S GUILT	24
DA SHATHA'S OATH	38
THE THE MOTHER	49
MOTHER AND SON	58
THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE	68
FAREWELL	81
KALYANIAN LAMENT	94
THE HERMIT'S SON	96
THE TRIAL OF TRUTH	107
CHITRAKUTA	111
MANDAKINI	115
THE RAPT OF SITA	118
RAMA'S DESPAIR	130
SITA IN PRISON	134
RAMA IN THE SPRING	142
TIDINGS OF SITA	145
RAVAN'S PALACE	147
KUMBHAKARNA	153
THE ONFALL	160
RAVAN DEAD	162
SITA DI GRACED	166
HOME	170
THE ME FINGER GUILT	173
THE SUPPLANT DOVE	227
THE DE CENT OF CANCA	232
TARA'S LAMENT	236
TRUTH GLARY	239
INCRATITUDE	241
FEEL THE POOR	245
THE WISE CHOICE	244





## PREFACE

THERE are two recensions of the Ramayan, one belonging to Benares and the North West of India, the other to Bengal proper. Two books out of the seven of which the latter consists, were published with an English prose translation in 1806 and 1810 by Carey and Marshman, the venerable Missionaries of Serampore. Two books of the Benares recension, with an excellent Latin translation of the first book and part of the second, were published in 1829 by Augustus William von Schlegel. A magnificent edition of the Bengal recension, with an accurate and elegant translation into Italian,<sup>1</sup> has since been brought out, under royal auspices, by Signor Gorresio of Turin, and a French translation of this edition has been published by M. Hippolyte Fauche. There is an excellent article on the Ramayan in the Westminster Review,<sup>1</sup> Vol. L, and another full of interest

ing information on the same subject in the forty-fifth Number of the Calcutta Review. Professor Williams's "Indian Epic Poetry" gives a full analysis of the poem with several metrical specimens, and Mrs. Speir in "Life in 'Ancient India," and Mlle Clarisse Bader in "La Femme dans L'Inde Antique" have written lovingly and gracefully upon the great work of Valmiki. To these authorities (and to Mr. Talboys Wheeler's second volume of his history of India) the reader is referred for the results of European criticism upon the poem and for the opinions formed of it in the West by those who have become acquainted with the great poem of the Hindus either in the original or by means of translation. Here, instead of an introduction of my own, I offer what I think will be more interesting, some remarks by Baboo Pramadadas Mittra, an orthodox Hindu, formerly my pupil and now my esteemed colleague

"The Ramayan is the oldest and most glorious

poem of India, and its author, the saint Valmiki, who is consequently called *Adi Kavi* or the Father of poetry, is held in the greatest veneration “I adore that *kokila*—Valmiki, who mounted on the branch of poesy, wrhles in honeyed accents ‘Rama’ and ‘Rama’ and ‘Rama again —this is a literal rendering of the stanza of salutation, composed by an unknown author, which prefaces every manuscript of the poem and genuinely breathes the feelings with which the Hindu regards this holy bard The account given in the beginning of the poem of the incidents which led to its composition beautifully harmonizes with the main composition and touchingly shows how exquisitely tender and pure was that saintly heart which breathed forth a poem unrivalled perhaps in the world for its pathos and moral purity One day the saint accompanied by his disciple resorted to the holy stream Tamasa and finding the waters pure as the heart of the good asked his disciple to fetch his garment of bark He put it on, and descended into the

stream, performed his ablutions and muttered his prayers. Afterwards while roving amidst the woods situated on the banks of the sacred river, he saw a couple of herons wandering secure. On a sudden the male was shot dead by a fowler, and the female, tossing herself about in the air, screamed out most pitifully her lamentations. At this act of cruelty, the grief of the holy saint burst forth in the exclamation :

मा निषाद प्रतिष्ठां त्वमगमः शश्वतोः समाः ।

यत्क्रौञ्चमिथुनादेकमवधोः काममोहितम् ॥

‘Never for endless years, O forester, shalt thou obtain rest, as thou hast killed one of the loving couple of herons ’<sup>1</sup>

He was struck with the rhythm of the sentence he had almost unconsciously uttered, he brooded over it and the piteous event which called it forth. As he

<sup>1</sup> Or, to versify in the metre of the original, excepting the rhyme

‘No rest for ever circling years, mayst thou, O forester, obtain

By whose fell hand this harmless bird, while sporting with his mate,  
was slain’

was seated in this mood of meditation and tenderness, Brahma himself, the creator of the world, appeared, as it is said, before him, exhorted him to sing the deeds of the glorious hero Rama in the metre in which his tenderness had expressed itself, and inspired him with the knowledge of his whole history, in all its particulars whether hidden or public, the divine saint Narada having already introduced him to it by a relation of the main events. This account which is now contained in the introductory portion of the poem itself was perhaps originally preserved separately by tradition.

Valmiki, who was contemporary with his hero, began to compose his poem when Rama had ascended his paternal throne, having returned from the woods, with his Sita restored.

To write a criticism on the poetry of the Ramayan nicely discerning and aptly delineating the vari-

ous beauties is a task requiring an ability far more than I can lay claim to I will therefore simply express the general feelings which its perusal excites in every Hindu of true sensibility. No where else, I believe, are poetry and morality so charmingly united each elevating the other as in the pages of this really holy poem. There are indeed many poetical compositions nay almost all good poetry is such as forcibly teach us some moral truths, but the Ramayan is the only poem which inspires our breasts with a love of goodness in the entire sense of the word. We rise from its perusal with a loftier idea of almost all the virtues that can adorn man of truth, of filial piety, of paternal love, of female chastity and devotion, of a husband's faithfulness and love, of fraternal affection, of meekness, of forgiveness, of fortitude, of universal benevolence What, for instance, can excite a greater reverence of Divine Truth than the perusal of that scene where Dasaratha parts with his beloved son for her sake and at last

sacrifices his life for her? What can more impressively teach us filial love than the conduct of Rama giving up his domestic felicity, his kingdom, to preserve his father's vow? Well may the Ramayan challenge the literature of every age and country to produce a poem that can boast of such perfect characters as a Rama and a Sita.

The loftiness of its moral tone, though a high one, is not the only recommendation of the poem. It is true, in several places, it is mere prosaic narration, yet there is an ample profusion in it of true poetry—glowing delineations of human passions, delicate paintings of natural beauties, and magnificent descriptions of battle scenes.

In the “Scenes” now offered to the public something like a connected story of the hero's adventures is given from his birth to the loss of Sita the remainder of the story including the Siege of Lanka



the Defeat of Ravan, and the happy recovery of Sita, may, perhaps, follow. The " Birth of Rama," I should observe, is not from the Ramayan, but from the Raghuvansa of the later poet Kalidasa

The chief characteristic of the Ramayan being simplicity, I have not attempted to give my lines a polish which would lessen their resemblance to the original, and I have endeavoured rather to be faithful to the spirit of my author and, if possible, to be readable, than to translate as closely as I might have done.

The Messenger Cloud is the work of Kalidasa, the poet of sweet Sakontala. If Professor H. H. Wilson's graceful version of this little poem had been easily accessible to the general reader I should not have attempted my paraphrase

Most of the pieces now published in a collective form have appeared in the *Pandit*, the Benares Col-

lege Journal of Sanskrit literature the "Hermit's Son" is reprinted, with a few alterations, from "Specimens of Old Indian Poetry

BENARES }  
*July 17th 1868* }

A few slight alterations have been made in this edition, and the following pieces have been added, SITA IN PRISON, RAMA IN THE SPRING, TIDINGS OF SITA, RAVAN'S PALACE, THE OMEN, RAVAN DEAD, SITA DISGRACED, HOME, THE DESCENT OF OANGA, TARA'S LAMENT, AND INORATITUDE

BENARES COLLEGE }  
*January 1870* }



## AYODHYA<sup>1</sup>

---

Nous sommes dans Ayodhya, le séjour des princes de la dynastie glorieuse. Dasaratha règne. Nous sommes en plein âge d'or et en lisant les nombreuses descriptions de la royauté on se fait une haute idée de la civilisation de l'Inde dans un siècle antérieur à celui de Salomon. —MILLE CRISTINE BADEL *La Femme dans l'Inde Ant.*

On pleases Sarjus<sup>2</sup> fertile side  
There lies a rich domain  
With countless herds of cattle thronged  
And gay with golden grain  
There built by Manu<sup>3</sup> Prince of men  
That saint by all revered

<sup>1</sup> The ruins of the ancient capital of Ram and the Children of the Sun may still be traced in the present Ajudhya, near Fyzabad. Ajudhya is the Jerusalem or Mecca of the Hindus.

<sup>2</sup> The Sarju or Ghagra, anciently called Sarayu rises in the Himalayas and after flowing through the province of Oudh falls into the Ganges.

<sup>3</sup> This Manu was the first prince of the Solar dynasty  
First Manu reigned revered by every age —*Raghuransa* I 16

Ayodhya, famed through every land,  
Her stately towers upreared  
Her vast extent, her structures high,  
With every beauty deckt,  
Like Indra's city,<sup>1</sup> showed the skill  
Of godlike architect  
Or like a bright creation sprung  
From himner's magic art,  
She seemed too beautiful for stone  
So fair was every part.  
Twelve leagues the queenly city lay  
Down the broad river's side,  
And, guarded well with moat and wall,  
The foeman's power defied  
Her ample streets were nobly planned,  
And streams of water flowed  
To keep the fragrant blossoms fresh,  
That strewed her royal road  
There many a princely palace stood  
In line on level ground,

<sup>1</sup> Indra is the Hindu Jove. The name of his celestial city is Amaravati

Here temple and triumphal arc  
And rampart banner-crowned  
There gilded turrets rose on high  
Above the waving green  
Of mango-groves and bloomy trees  
And flowery knots between  
On battlement and gilded spire  
The pennon waved in state  
And warders with the ready bow  
Kept watch at every gate  
She shone a very mine of gems  
The throne of Fortune's Queen  
So many lined her gay parterres  
So bright her fountains sheen  
Her pleasure grounds were filled at eve  
With many a happy throng  
And ever echoed with the sound  
Of merry feast and song  
Lot meat and drink of noblest sort  
In plenty there were stored  
And all enjoyed their share of wealth,  
Nor heaped the miser's hoard

At morn the blossom-scented air  
     The clouds of incense stirred,  
 And blended with the wreath's perfume  
     The sweet fresh smell of mud  
 Streamed through her streets, in endless line,  
     Slow wain and flying car  
 Horse, elephant, and merchant train  
     And envoys from afar  
 Her ample arsenals were filled  
     With sword, and club, and mace  
 And wondrous engines, dealing death,<sup>1</sup>  
     Within her towers had place  
 Nor there unknown the peaceful arts  
     That youthful souls entrance,  
 Of player, minstrel, mime, and bard,  
     And girls that weave the dance  
 There rose to heaven the Veda-chant,  
     Here blent the lyre and lute  
 There rang the stalwart archer's string,  
     Here softly breathed the flute

<sup>1</sup> The *sataghnî*, i. e. *centicide*, or slayer of a hundred, is generally supposed, says Wilson, to be a sort of fire arms, or the ancient Indian rocket, but it is also described as a stone set round with iron spikes

The swiftest horses whirled her cars  
 Of noblest form and breed  
 Vanayu s' mare that mocked the wind  
 And Vahli s' fiery steed  
 There elephants that once had roamed  
 On Vindhya s mountains vied  
 With monsters from the bosky dells  
 That shag Himalaya s side  
 The best of Brahmans gathered there  
 The flame of worship fed  
 And versed in all the Vedas lore  
 Their lives of virtue led  
 By penance charity and truth  
 They kept each sense controlled  
 And giving freely of their store  
 Rivalled the saints of old  
 Her dames were peerless for the charm  
 Of figure voice and face  
 For lovely modesty and truth  
 And woman s gentle grace

<sup>1</sup> The location of Vanayu is not exactly determined. It seems to have lain to the North West of India.

Vahli or Vahluka is the modern Balkh



Their husbands, loyal, wise, and kind,  
    Were heroes in the field,  
And sternly battling with the foe,  
    Could die, but never yield  
The poorest man was richly blest  
    With knowledge, wit, and health,  
Each lived contented with his own,  
    Nor envied other's wealth  
All scorned to hoard no miser there  
    His buried silver stored  
The braggart and the boast were shunned,  
    The slanderous tongue abhorred  
Each kept his high observances,  
    And loved one faithful spouse  
And troops of happy children crowned,  
    With fruit, their holy vows

## RAVAN DOOMED

---

Lanka, or Ceylon had fallen under the dominion of a prince named Ravan who was a demon of such power that by dint of penance he had extorted from the God Brahma a promise that no immortal should destroy him. Such a promise was as relentless as the Greek Fate from which Jove himself could not escape and Ravan now deeming himself invulnerable gave up asceticism and tyrannized over the whole of southern India. At length even the Gods in heaven were deterred by the destruction of holiness and oppression of virtue consequent upon Ravan's tyrannies and they called a council in the mansion of Brahma to consider how the earth could be relieved from such a flood. —MRS SPEER *Life* n 4 cent I d a

Thus to the Lord by whom the worlds were made  
 The Gods of Heaven in full assembly prayed  
 O Brahma mighty by thy tendered grace  
 Fierce Ravan leader of the giant race  
 Torments the Gods too feeble to withstand  
 The ceaseless fury of his heavy hand

From thee well pleased, he gained in days of old  
That saving gift by which he waves bold ,  
And we, obedient to that high behest,  
Bear all his outrage, patient and oppress  
He scourges—impious fiend earth, hell, and sky ,  
And Indra, lord of Gods, would fain defy  
Mad with thy boon, he vexes in his rage  
Fiend, angel, seraph, Brahman, saint, and sage  
From him the Sun restrains his wonted glow ,  
Nor dares the Wind upon his face to blow ,  
And Ocean, necklaced with the wandering wave,  
Stills the wild waters till they cease to rave  
O Father, lend us thine avenging aid,  
And slay this fiend, for we are sore afraid '

They ceased Then pondering in his secret mind,  
' One way,' He said, ' to stay this scourge, I find  
Once, at his prayer, I swore his life to guard  
From God and angel, fiend, and heavenly bard  
But the proud giant, in o'erweening scorn,  
Recked not of mortal foe, of woman born

Man only man this hideous pest may slay  
None else can take his charmed life away

When Brahma's speech the Gods and sages heard  
Their fainting souls with hope reviving stirred  
Then crowned with glory like a mighty flame  
Lord Vishnu timely to the council came  
Shell mace and discus in his hands he bore  
And royal raiment tinged with gold he wore  
Hailed by the Gods most glorious to behold  
With shining armlets forged of burnisht gold  
He rode his eagle through the reverent crowd  
Like the Sun borne upon a darksome cloud  
Lost in deep thought he stood by Brahma's side  
While all the Immortals praised his name and cried

O Vishnu Lord divine thine aid we crave  
Friend of the worlds the ruined worlds to save  
Divide thy godhead Lord and for the sake  
Of Gods and men man's nature on thee take !

*Cp P radis Lo t Book III 281*

The r nature als to thy natu e join  
And be thy elf man among m n on earth

'The fell fiend Ravan, ravener' abhorred,  
 Slay him, and all his race, avenging Lord '  
 Then turn triumphant to thine home on high  
 And reign for ever in the ransomed sky.'

<sup>1</sup> *Virāṭanam rāṭanam* Literally Ravan who causes weeping

For a similar play upon the word *cp* Paradise Regained

"And saw the *rarens* with their horned beaks

Food to Elijah bringing, even and morn,

Though *ravenous*, taught to abstain from what they brought

## THE BIRTH OF RAMA

---

The scene changes to earth where Dasaratha King of Ayodhya after a life spent in deeds of virtue finds his years drawing to a close without any heir to defend his old age or succeed to his crown. A holy rish or saint reveals to him that he shall obtain heirs on performing the *Asvamedha*, or sacrifice of a horse which occupies such a pre eminent place in the Hindu religious rites. The sacrifice is accordingly performed and with the promised result. Dasaratha's three wives become the mothers of four sons all participating in the divine nature of Vishnu but Rama, the eldest, is Vishnu himself — *Western Aster Review* October 1848 p. 41

With costly sacrifice with praise and prayer  
 Ayodhya's King had claimed from Heaven an heir  
 When from the shrine where burnt the holy flame  
 Scaring the priests a glorious angel came  
 With arms that trembled as they scarce could hold  
 A flood of nectar in a vase of gold

A weight too vast for even him to bear,  
 For Vishnu's self, the first of Gods, was there  
 With reverent awe the Lord of Kosal's land'  
 Received the nectar from the angel's hand,  
 As erst Lord Indra from the milky wave  
 Took the sweet drink that troubled Ocean gave<sup>2</sup>

Soon as the queens had shared that mystic bowl,  
 Hope, sure and stedfast, filled each lady's soul  
 They saw, in dreams, a glorious host who kept  
 Their watch around them, as they sweetly slept  
 They mounted skyward on the Feathered King,<sup>3</sup>  
 Who spread a glory with each golden wing,  
 And as he shot through plains of ether drew  
 The cloudy rack to follow where he flew  
 Now Lakshmi,<sup>4</sup> with her consort's mystic gem

<sup>1</sup> Kosala was the name of the kingdom of which Ayodhya was capital

<sup>2</sup> The *Amrit*, or nectar of the Indian Gods, buried at the Deluge recovered at the *Churning of the Ocean*. The story is told in the *Mahābhārata* and translated in *Specimens of old Indian Poetry*

<sup>3</sup> The sacred bird of Vishnu, Garuda by name

<sup>4</sup> Lakshmi, Goddess of Beauty and Fortune, was the wife of Vishnu  
 mystic gem is called Kaustubha

"the best

Of gems, that burns with living light  
 Upon Lord Vishnu's breast."

Sparkling upon her breast for love of them  
 Came from the skies and her own radiant hand  
 Their slumbering eyelids with a lotus fanned  
 Then from their homes on high—their holy hru  
 Damp from the lucid stream that wanders there—  
 Came in a glorious dream the star throned Seven<sup>1</sup>  
 Whispering softly of the Lord of Heaven

Proud waxed the Monarch as each happy queen  
 Told the bright visions that her eyes had seen  
 No king he deemed with him in bliss could vie  
 No nor the Father of the earth and sky  
 As many a river lends its silver breast  
 Where the calm image of the moon may rest  
 So in the bosom of each lady lay  
 That God divided who is one for aye  
 Soon like the luminous herb which ere tis night  
 Wins from the setting sun a ray of light

<sup>1</sup> The seven great saints who are the stars of the constellation of Ursa  
 Major The seven great saints who star the northern sky *Birth of the  
 War God*

<sup>2</sup> The setting sun says the Indian poets deposits a portion of his light  
 with certain plants which emit luminous rays in his absence

Like gems in darkness, issuing rays

They've treasured from the sun the treasure —*Lalla Rookh*



Kausalya<sup>1</sup> gained a child, a lovely star,  
To chase the shadow of the night afar  
A babe so bright, that every torch grew dim  
In the Queen's chamber, when it shone near him.  
They named him Rama,<sup>2</sup> for the child shall bring  
Eternal joy to all who hail him King  
Then the young mother, languid, pale, and worn,  
Looked, as she nursed her babe, her newly born,  
Like Ganga by the autumn heat opprest,  
With one sweet lotus on her island-breast.  
And Queen Kaikeyi bare a noble child,  
Named Bharat, beautiful, and meek, and mild .  
By fond affection and obedience, sent  
To be his mother's pride and ornament  
Like gentle modesty that lends new grace  
To each dear winning charm of Beauty's face  
Then Queen Sumitra, fairest of the fair,  
Twin children, Lakshman and Satrugghna, bare  
Thus self-control and knowledge spring to light,  
When fruitful learning is employed aright

<sup>1</sup> Kausalya was chief of the three queens of Dasaratha

<sup>2</sup> Rama is derived from the root *Ram* to sport, take pleasure.

The babes were born then sin and sorrow fled  
And joy and virtue reigned supreme instead  
For Vishnu e self disdained not mortal birth  
And Heaven came with him as he came to earth  
Once more the regions where each guardian lord  
Had quailed before the giant he abhorred  
Were cheered with breezes pure from dust and stain  
And freed from terror hailed a gentler reign  
The fire was dimmed by cloudy smoke no more  
And the sun shone untroubled as before  
But Ravana e Glory poured her sorrowe down  
In jewels dropping from the giant e crown  
While drums of triumph heaten in the sky  
Woke the King s music to a glad reply  
And the first rite to bless the joyful hour  
Was the rich down pour of a fragrant shower  
Of blossoms falling from the heavenly trees  
On the proud monarch s gilded galleries

Graced with the holy rites and nursed with care  
As the babes strengthened fairer and more fair,

So with their growth increased their father's joy  
 An elder brother to each darling boy  
 Modest by nature, gentle nurture's aid  
 More modest still the youthful princes made  
 Thus, when the sacred oil its influence lends,  
 In brighter spires the hallowed flame ascends  
 With virtues blent in sweet accord to grace  
 The ancient line of Raghu's' sinless race  
 As all the seasons of the year combine  
 To deck the garden where the Gods recline.  
 They loved as brothers in their royal home,  
 But still in pairs they ever chose to roam  
 Rama and Lakshman closer ties albed,  
 And Bharat wandered by Satrugna's side,  
 Linkt in eternal love, like wind and fire,  
 Or the dear Moon and Sea his foster-sire<sup>2</sup>  
 As when, at summer's close, dark clouds arise,  
 Bringing sweet comfort to men's longing eyes,

<sup>1</sup> Raghu, the great grandfather of Rama was one of the most celebrated of the Solar dynasty and has given his name to the family

<sup>2</sup> At the *Churning of the Ocean* the moon with other buried treasures was recovered from the Ocean, by whom, therefore, it is still regarded with parental affection

So the fair children won the people's hearts  
By gentle graces and attractive arts  
Men deemed that Duty Profit Love and Bliss  
Had come incarnate from their world to this  
And with more pride the father's bosom glowed  
For the rare virtues and the love they showed  
Than for the pearls in countless tribute poured  
By the four oceans to delight their lord

## THE HEIR APPARENT.

And when at eve his warlike task was o'er  
He sat and listened to their peaceful lore.  
Just pure and prudent full of tender ruth  
The foe of falsehood and the friend of truth  
Kind slow to anger prompt at misery's call  
He loved the people and was loved of all  
Proud of the duties of his Warrior race  
His soul was worthy of his princely place  
Resolved to win, by many a glorious deed  
Throned with the Gods in Heaven a priceless meed  
What though Brihaspati<sup>1</sup> might hardly vie  
With him in eloquence and quick reply  
None heard the music of his sweet lips flow  
In idle wrangling or for empty show  
He shunned no toils that student's life befit  
But learned the Vedas and all Holy Writ  
And even eclipsed his father's archer fame  
So swift his arrow and so sure his aim

Then rose a longing in the Monarch's breast  
'O that the Gods would take me to their rest'

<sup>1</sup> The Preceptor of the Gods

Might I but see, ere yet my course be run,  
The hallowed waters poured upon my son  
See in mine age, a worthy heir, mine own  
Beloved Rama on Ayodhya's throne ' '  
Then with his friends he counselled that his heir  
Should ease his burthen and divide the care  
For, old and worn, he felt that death was nigh,  
And dark signs threatened both in earth and sky  
But still he quailed not, for he knew how dear  
All held Prince Rama, and this banisht fear

Forthwith he summoned, for the solemn day,  
People and princes near and far away  
They came . and splendid in his king's attire  
He looked upon them, as the Eternal Sire,  
In all the glory of a God arrayed,  
Gazes upon the creatures he has made

Like heavenly music, very sweet and loud,  
Thus spake the Monarch to the gathered crowd  
' Needs not for me, ye noble lords, to show,  
How like fond fathers, as full well ye know,

The ancient monarchs of our famous line  
 Have ruled this mighty realm which now is mine  
 Their glorious steps forbade my feet to stray  
 And I have laboured with a loving sway  
 Neath the white canopy's imperial shade<sup>1</sup>  
 Till strength is vanisht and my health decayed  
 To bless my people if they have been blest.  
 And now my weary spirit longs for rest  
 For many thousand years have o'er me flown<sup>2</sup>  
 And many generations round me grown  
 And past away No longer can I bear  
 The ruler's labour and the judge's care  
 The royal power and dignity a weight  
 Too vast but for the young and temperate  
 I long to rest mine anxious labour done  
 And on the throne to set my darling son.  
 For all the virtues lent to me adorn  
 Rama my dearest and my eldest born.

<sup>1</sup> The white umbrella was one of the insignia of royalty

The ancient kings of India enjoyed lives of more than patriarchal length  
 While thus Indra reigns above the sky  
 He ruled the earth ten thousand years flew by  
*Raghuransa* X. 1



Ye have the plan which I have pondered long  
Approve it now, or, if ye deem it wrong,  
Show, after due debate, a wiser way,  
Which I will strive to follow if I may'

He ceased    A murmur of so loud acclaim  
From lords and commons in glad answer came,  
As when wild peacocks at the rain rejoice,  
And hail the big cloud with their jubilant voice  
The general shout from all the people round  
Shook the high palace with a storm of sound  
And when the crowd, assembled there, had learned  
The will of him who right and gain discerned,  
After a brief debate, with one accord,  
They spake in answer to their sovereign lord

' Rest, aged King, and let Prince Rama share  
The toil too sore for thee, as Regent Heir  
Our own dear Prince so gallant and so strong,  
All tongues will bless him as he rides along,  
All hearts rejoice above his brow to see  
The canopy that long has shaded thee

Amid the noblest of the world not one  
Can match the virtues of thy godlike son  
In him alone all peerless graces blend  
The fearless foeman and the faithful friend  
Versed in the statutes kind to all in need  
Quick to encourage every noble deed  
True to his promise resolute of soul  
Curbing each passion with a firm control  
Kind to the Brahmans skilled in Scripture's page  
The friend of learning and the prop of age  
Matchless on earth with spear and sword and shield  
Lord of the arms which heavenly warriors wield  
Thine order bids him tame some foeman's pride,  
He comes a victor Lakshman at his side  
Then from his elephant or car he bends  
To greet the townsmen as beloved friends  
Asks how each man and child and servant thrives  
How fare our young disciples babes and wives  
And like a loving father bids us tell  
That Heaven accepts our rites and all is well  
Long has each matron long each tender maid  
At morn and eve for Rama's welfare prayed

And Rama's glories every hour are sung  
In town and village by the old and young  
Then grant the prayer, by us this day renewed,  
And consecrate our Prince, Lord Rama, lotus-hued

## MANTHARA'S GUILF

"But this happiness was all destroyed by the intrigues of Dasaratha's second wife who was jealous of Rama and determined that her son Bharat should be the future king. Mrs. Srin.

High on the palace roof Kaikeyi's maid  
The crook back Manthara, the town surveyed  
She saw the water sprinkled over the street  
And flowery heaps and garlands fresh and sweet  
Saw pennons playing in the scented air  
And busy Brahmans bustling here and there  
From every corner as around she gazed  
She heard a concert of glad music raised  
While every temple shone with purest white  
That the maid marvelled at the festive sight

She turned to Rama's nurse, who standing by,  
Gazed on the scene with rapture-rolling eye,  
And cried 'I pray thee, aged matron, say,  
Does Rama's mother scatter gifts to-day ?  
Have the Gods listened to Kausalya's vow,  
And made the frugal Queen so lavish now ?'

The white-robed nurse, with transport uncontrolled,  
All the glad story to the damsel told  
'To-morrow's happy light will see,' she cried,  
'Prince Rama Regent by his father's side'

Down from the roof, high as Kailasa's<sup>1</sup> head,  
In furious haste the crook-back maiden sped  
Planning accursed guile, her soul aflame,  
Where Queen Kaikeyi lay asleep, she came  
'Up, Queen' she cried, 'unclose thy heedless eyes,  
Huge peril threatens thee, awake ! arise !  
Art thou still sleeping, still too blind to see  
The load of misery that crushes thee ?

<sup>1</sup> 'One of the loftiest peaks of the Himalayas.

Boast of thy husband's love and find too late  
 His vaunted favour but disguises hate  
 Ruin to thee and thine thy lord has planned  
 To make Prince Rama Regent o'er the land  
 In fear and grief and rage thy faithful slave  
 Has hither fled to warn thee and to save  
 Are not my fortunes closely knit with thine?  
 Thy gain and peril, both are also mine  
 And thou the scion of a princely race  
 Shouldst know the frauds which royal hearts disgrace  
 Poor Queen he loves thee not thy treacherous lord  
 Can smile upon thee while he bares the sword  
 And thy sweet soul pure from all thought of sin  
 Sees not the cruel snares that hem thee in  
 Kind flattering words he makes thine empty dower  
 But Queen Kausalya has the wealth and power  
 Far from thy side thine own dear son he sends  
 To live an exile with his mother's friends  
 And every rival thus removed from sight  
 He gives to Rama all the royal might  
 Alas ! deluded lady thou hast prest  
 A deadly serpent to thy foolish breast,

Lavishing love on him who works thee woe,  
No loving husband but a mortal foe.  
Come, rouse thee, mistress, while there yet is time,  
Ensure thy safety and prevent the crime  
Up from thy careless ease ! awake, and be  
The saviour of thy son, thyself, and me.'

Up rose Kaikeyi radiant with delight,  
Like the calm moon upon the autumn night,  
And spoke these words in answer, as she gave,  
For the glad news, a necklace to the slave .  
'Take this, dear maiden, for thy pains, and say  
How can my love thy welcome tale repay.  
I joy that Rama shares his father's throne :  
I love Kausalya's son e'en as I love mine own'

The handmaid's soul with grief and fury burned ,  
She cried in anger, as the gift she spurned  
'What' on the sea of whelming ruin tost,  
Canst thou rejoice when all but hope is lost ?  
Heart-sick I am, yet smile to see thy joy  
When peril threatens and will soon destroy.

If thou wert wise thou scarce wouldst hail I ween  
 For king the offspring of a rival queen  
 Soon wilt thou stand in menial habit drest  
 And move obedient to her high behest  
 Yea thou wilt serve with us who serve thee now  
 And see thy child before his brother bow  
 Then Rama's wife will triumph queen of all  
 And thy poor daughter be a helpless thrall

The virtuous Rama thus the dame replied  
 From virtuous path will never turn aside  
 Obedient grateful pure from stain and true  
 As eldest born he only gains his due  
 His lords and brethren many a year will share  
 Blest in his rule his kind paternal care  
 And when a hundred years have past away  
 My son dear Bharat will enjoy the sway  
 I love Prince Rama as mine own dear son  
 I see no fault to stain him no not one  
 Gentle and lowly good and kind is he  
 Meek to his mother meeker still to me



What though he rule, there is no cause of fear,  
To him his brethren as his soul are dear  
And though in name his father's place he fill,  
Bharat will share the royal sceptre still'

Kaikeyi ceased    The impatient maiden sighed,  
And thus with tears of grief and spite replied .  
' Ah Queen, what frenzy has assailed thy mind,  
And made thee thus to instant danger blind ?  
Too blind to mark the seas of grief and woe  
That o'er thy head with whelming fury flow.  
For after Rama Rama's son will reign,  
Nor hope of kingship for thy child remain  
One heir is monarch when a monarch dies,  
Else wild confusion in the state would rise  
And be he good or bad, the power will fall  
To him, the eldest born and lord of all.  
Know, tender mother, that thy boy must flee,  
A wretched outcast, from his home and thee.  
For Rama's hand thy darling son will drive  
An exile hence, if haply left alive

Come take the counsel that is wise and good  
And banish Rama to the distant wood  
Then we who serve thee well a faithful train  
Will hail with joy Prince Bharat's happier reign.  
How shall he, worthy of a nobler fate  
From birth the object of his brother's hate  
Poor and despised his wealthy tyrant's scorn  
Obeys the mandates of the elder born?  
Arise sweet Queen to save thy child arise!  
Prostrate beneath his brother's feet he lies  
Like some young elephant who proud to lead  
His trooping consorts through the woods to feed  
Meets with a hungry lion in the way  
And sinks in death his ruthless victor's prey

Then flashed the fury from Kaikeyi's eyes  
As thus she spake with long and burning sighs  
This day my son upon the throne shall see  
And Rama banished to the wood shall flee  
But aid me damsel and some plan declare  
To drive him hence and make my child the heir  
Hast thou forgotten? thus the maid replied

'Or dost thou love thy secret thoughts to hide?  
Or dost thou wish, gay Queen, to hear me tell  
An ancient story which thou knowest well?  
Then I will speak. Lady, be thine to hear,  
And mark my counsel with attentive ear  
In days of yore the Gods thy husband chose  
To aid their arms against their demon foes  
Thou, of thy love, didst follow where he led,  
And thou wast near him when he fought and bled  
Thy care preserved him, when in desperate strife  
He sank exhausted, and restored his life  
Grateful for this, thy loving husband swore  
To grant two boons, thy first and second prayer.  
Then come, remind him of his ancient oath,  
Recall the promised gifts and claim them both  
For thine own son, thy well-loved Bharat, claim  
The right of heirship and the Regent's name,  
And pray that Rama in the woods may roam  
Twice seven long years an exile from his home  
Once more attend the gloomy chamber<sup>1</sup> seek,

<sup>1</sup> Literally, *the chamber of wrath*, a 'growlery,' a small, dark, room, to which, it seems, the wives and ladies of the King used to betake themselves when offended

Rage in thine eye and tears upon thy cheek ,  
 With robes disordered and dishevelled hair  
 Fall on the cold ground and lie prostrate there  
 When the King comes still sad and speechless lie  
 Give him no answer lift not up thine eye  
 Well do I know that thou hast ever been  
 And more than ever art, his favourite queen  
 For thy dear sake he'd dare O well loved dame  
 To cast his body to the burning flame  
 Such death were welcome but he neer will brook  
 To anger thee or bear thine angry look  
 Fmn will he offer gems and pearls and gold  
 Heed not his gifts be silent stern and cold  
 Then to his mind those promised boons recall  
 And claim them boldly he will grant thee all  
 When he has raised his darling from the floor  
 And sworn again to grant as first he swore  
 Then for thy son demand the roynl sway  
 And drive Prince Rama to the woods away  
 Hope and be bold the King is well inclined  
 And this the hour to move his easy mind

Then Queen Kaikeyi, full of joy and pride,  
Thus to her maid in gladsome tone replied  
‘ Good is the plan thy ready wits devise,  
Sagest of damsels, true and deep and wise !  
Without thy constant care, thy faithful aid,  
Unknown to me the King his plot had laid  
The crook-back race are hideous to the sight,  
Deformed, malicious, born for guile and spite .  
Far other thou, with features formed to please,  
A lovely lotus bending to the breeze  
Thy hump, dear damsel, too, becomes thee well,  
For there the arts of noble warriors dwell ,  
And when Kausalya’s son makes way for mine,  
Around that hump a chain of gold shall shine  
Yes, I will deck thee on that happy day  
When Rama banisht takes my fear away .  
With finest gold these hands thy hump shall deck,  
And fling rich pearls around thy graceful neck  
A precious frontlet, wrought with utmost care,  
Bound on thy brow, shall make thy face more fair ;  
And thou shalt move along in bright attire,  
Each woman’s envy and each man’s desire

Fair as a lovely Goddess shalt thou be  
And challengo the sweet moon to rival thee

Her lady's praiso with joy the damsel heard  
And thus again with wiles her spirit stirred  
As the Queen lay upon her sumptuous bed  
Like sacred fire upon the altar fed

Mistress, arise the glorious plot complete  
Let the King find thee in thy dark retreat,  
No prudent builder will the bridge delay  
Till the wild waters shall have rolled away '  
She ceased. The lady of the glorious eyes  
Rose from her couch as Manthara bade her rise  
And sought the mourner's cell in beauty's pride  
Sure of his love who gave and ne'er denied  
There on the ground obedient to the girl  
She threw her necklace and each peerless pearl  
And all the lustre to her beauty lent  
By sparkling chain and golden ornament  
Like a fair nymph upon the ground she fell  
And Soon she cried thy task will be to tell  
That Bharat rules as heir in Rama's stead  
Or that the Monarch's darling queen is dead

## DASARATHA'S OATH.



“ Unfortunately Dasaratha had once given a promise to Bharat's mother that he would grant any two boons she pleased to ask The promise had been made in years gone by, when he had been dangerously wounded in battle, and carefully attended by this wife, Kaikeyi, and amongst Hindus a promise was irrevocable, and therefore the wretched King felt compelled to yield, although the first boon required was to banish Rama for a period of fourteen years, and the second to declare Bharat the heir apparent ” *Life in Ancient India*

Slow and majestic, as the Lord of Night,<sup>1</sup>  
When his full glory fears the Dragon's<sup>2</sup> might,  
Glides through the calm fields of the autumn sky,  
Where clouds with fleecy skirts are floating by,

<sup>1</sup> The moon, with the Hindus, is masculine

<sup>2</sup> Rahu, the ascending node, is in mythology a demon with the tail of a dragon whose head was severed from his body by Visnu, but being immortal the head and tail retained their separate existence, and being transferred to the stellar sphere became the authors of eclipses, the first especially by endeavouring to swallow the sun and moon

So to Kaikeyi's palace rich and vast  
 King Dasaratha in his glory past  
 There stalked flamingoes mixt with swans and cranes  
 And gorgeous peacocks spread their jewelled trains,  
 There screamed the parrot in his home of wire  
 There breathed the music of the flute and lyre  
 There many a damsel waited in the shade  
 Here sat a dwarf and there a crook back maid  
 Lay in the shadow of the woven bower  
 Where glowed the Champac<sup>1</sup> and Asoca<sup>2</sup> flower  
 There many a porch above the waving wood  
 On ivory columns wrought with silver stood  
 There trees that aye with fruit and blossom glowed  
 O'er limpid waters hung their tempting load  
 Here seats of silver and of gold were placed  
 Here cakes and viands lured the dainty taste  
 Not e'en the Gods who dwell at ease I ween  
 Could boast a brighter home than that fair queen

<sup>1</sup> A tree that bears yellow flowers of delicious fragrance  
 The maid of India blent again to hold  
 In her full lap the Champac leaves of gold. — *Lalla Rookh*

<sup>2</sup> The *Jonesia Asoca* one of the loveliest trees of India and perhaps of the whole world



With longing eyes the Monarch looked around,  
But no Kaikeyi in her bower he found ,  
Yet 'twas the time at which the royal dame  
Was ever there to greet him as he came  
Then, moved by love and vext with anxious thought,  
News of his darling from her maids he sought.  
'My lord,' a trembling damsel thus replied,  
'The Queen in anger to the cell has hied '  
Then sick at heart, his senses all astray,  
The Monarch hastened where the lady lay  
Upon the cold bare ground, in mean attire,  
While grief consumed her as a burning fire.  
Prostrate and speechless, lovely and forlorn,  
Like a sweet creeper by the roots upturn,  
Or a frail nymph of Heaven, or Goddess, hurled  
From glorious Swarga<sup>1</sup> to this nether world

As bends an elephant to heal the smart  
Of his mate wounded by a venomed dart,  
Soothes her with tender touch, and tries in vain  
To check the flowing blood and stay her pain ;

<sup>1</sup> Indra's Paradise.

So the sad husband tried each kind caress  
To still the fury of the Queen's distress  
I know not darling thus he spake with sighs  
To the fair lady of the lotus eyes  
The sudden cause of all this wrath and woe  
Why thou art angry why thine eyes overflow  
Who has offended thee or dared to slight  
My love my lady and my sole delight?  
Tell me my dearest, art thou faint or ill?  
I have physicians of unrivalled skill  
One for each varied malady and pain  
Come speak Kaikeyi and be well again  
Wouldst thou for foe or friend have dole or meed?  
The guiltless punished or the guilty freed?  
The low exalted or the proud disgraced?  
The poor made wealthy or the rich abased?  
Tell but thy secret wish dear love I pray  
My lords and I thy slightest word obey  
By all the merit that my life has won  
I swear my darling, speak and it is done  
The whole broad earth whereon the sunbeams shine  
And all her flocks and herds and gold and men

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My lords and I thy slightest word obey

By all the merit that my life has won

I swear my darling speak and it is done

The whole broad earth whereon the sunbeams shine

And all her flocks and corn and gold are mine

Choose what thou wilt no bounds shall bar thy choice,  
But let me hear again thine own dear voice,  
And all thy grief and pain shall pass away  
Like hoar frost shrinking from the God of Day'

The Queen replied 'No insult has distress,  
No fault of others has enraged my breast  
Come, with a mighty oath thine honour bind  
To grant the boon for which my soul has pined'  
She ceased The King, by his great love betrayed,  
Leapt, like a roedeer, to the snare she laid  
With a fond smile beneath his darling's head  
He placed his hand, and raised her up, and said -  
'Hast thou not learnt, my foolish love, till now,  
That on this earth there is none dear as thou  
To me, save only Rama? By his life  
I swear to grant thee what thou wilt, dear wife.  
I swear by him most worthy long to live,  
Blest with all blessings that the Gods can give,  
My peerless boy, pride of mine aged eye,  
Whom but one hour to see not, is to die.'

Now hear she cried ye thirty Gods and three  
Witness the oath that he has sworn to me !  
Hear it ye Sun and Moon , thou Ether hear  
O Night and Day O World and Space give ear !  
Listen thou Heaven above attend O Earth  
With visitants of more than mortal birth !  
Angel and demon and night wandering shade  
And Household Deities our present aid  
Each Power and high Intelligence with all  
That think and know to hear his oath I call  
And now I pray thee O my lord and king  
A time long past to thy remembrance bring  
When Gods and demons met in furious fray  
And I preserved thee on that awful day  
Call to thy mind the guerdon promised then  
And grant my double prayer O King of men  
If thou refuse to do as thou hast sworn  
Despised by thee I will not live till morn  
This solemn pomp in Rama a name begun—  
Grace Bharat with it consecrate my son  
And forth to Dandak's distant forest drive  
Thy Rama, banisht for nine years and five

There let him lead a hermit's life, and wear  
The deerskin mantle and the matted hair'

Like a poor doe who sees the tigress near,  
Lost and amazed and stupified with fear,  
He spoke no word, but sinking on the ground  
Sighed like a serpent by the charmer bound  
At length, when slowly voice and sense returned,  
He bent upon the Queen fierce eyes that burned  
With flashes of intolerable ire,  
Eager to scorch her with their furious fire :  
'What wrong,' he cried, 'have I or Rama done,  
Scourge of my house, thou fell and wicked one ?  
Hast thou the heart to ruin my sweet boy,  
And him who loves thee as a son, destroy ?  
Ah ! woe is me that e'er I made thee mine,  
And brought thee home, the ruin of my line,  
In name the daughter of a king, in truth  
A' deadly serpent with a venom'd tooth.  
Tell me, what fault can I pretend to find  
In virtuous Rama, praised by all mankind ?

How can I then my darling son forsake?  
No take my life my royal honours take  
Be either queen from my embraces torn  
But not my Rama, not mine eldest born  
Gazing on him mine aged eyes are glad  
And when I see him not my soul is sad  
The world may live without the sun the grain  
Spring from the earth without the genial rain  
But I without my son should be no more  
Take Rama from me and my life is o'er  
Banish the thought! thine impious plan forego  
How couldst thou scheme a plot so full of woe?  
Canst thou no mercy find no sorrow feel?  
See with thy feet upon my head I kneel  
Thou dost not mean it 'tis a cruel jest  
To try the love that warms a father's breast  
Hast thou not oft when in thy lap he smiled  
Sworn he was dear to thee as thine own child?  
Has he not since to youth and manhood grown  
Most sonlike love and sweet obedience shown?  
Never from man or woman have I heard  
Against my Rama one accusing word



His gentle manners, ever soft and kind,  
All hearts to him in firm affection bind  
Truthful and just, that noble prince of men  
Is loved and honoured by each citizen  
A docile pupil, prompt to succour woe,  
Feared by the foeman for his matchless bow  
Faithful and pious, reverent, sincere,  
Holy and wise, to all most justly dear  
Canst thou for him thy wicked plot devise,  
Good as the Gods and as the sages wise?  
No angry word, no harsh reproof e'er slips  
From the fair portal of his gentle lips  
And at thy bidding how can I consent  
To curse him with the doom of banishment?  
O wife, have mercy ' hear my bitter cry,  
A poor old weeping man whose death is nigh  
This sea-girt land has treasures rich and rare  
Take all, Kaikeyi, but my Rama spare  
Once more, O Queen, my suppliant hands entreat,  
Once more my lips are on thy lovely feet  
O save my Rama, save my dearest child,  
Nor let me die a wretch dishonoured and defiled.' •

No thrill of pity through her bosom ran  
 As thus again the cruel Queen began  
 If thou hast promised and art now forsworn  
 How wilt thou keep thine ancient name from scorn?  
 When gathered kings thy truth and honour praise  
 How wilt thou bear thine averted eyes to raise  
 And answer thus    Ah! Kings ye little know  
 My queen to whose fond care my life I owe  
 Saved by whose sweet love I am living now—  
 To her I promised and I broke my vow  
 Then will they scorn the king once counted just  
 And tread his vaunted honour in the dust  
 His flesh and blood the truthful Saivya<sup>1</sup> gave  
 And fed the hawk a suppliant dove to save  
 True to his word Alarka gave his eyes  
 And gained rich guerdon in the blissful skies  
 The furious sea himself his promise keeps  
 And ne'er beyond his stated limit sweeps

<sup>1</sup> A just and truthful king who being unwilling to deprive a hawk of his prey rather than to do to which he had promised protection gave his own flesh to the hawk who would accept nothing else instead. The story is told in the *Mahabharata* in different ways of more than one king.

<sup>2</sup> What more changeable than the Sea!  
 But over his great tides  
 Fidelity presides —WORDSWORTH

Remember all I did for thy dear sake,  
And tremble now thy promised word to break  
Thou hopest Rama to the throne to raise,  
And with Kausalya live voluptuous days  
But be it truth or falsehood, right or wrong,  
I claim thy promise unredeemed so long  
Make Rama Regent, and before thine eyes  
This day Kaikeyi drinks the bowl, and dies  
Far better die, than live one day, to see  
Obsequious subjects, with no glance on me,  
Before my rival Rama's mother stand,  
And hail her Lady with the suppliant hand  
Now by my son and by myself I swear,  
No tears shall soften me, no gift or prayer .  
This, only this shall now my soul content  
I claim thine oath and Rama's banishment'

## THE STEP MOTHER

---

The night long and dreary as a hundred years which the unhappy King has spent in lamentation and entreaties to the inexorable Kaikeyi is past, and the morn'g appointed for the consecration of Rama is come. Rama having been summoned enters the chamber where the King and Kaikeyi are

Weighed down by woe with wild despairing mien  
 There sate the Monarch with the cruel Queen  
 Then Rama bowed his royal sire to greet  
 And did obeisance at Kaikeyi's feet  
 The King with downcast eyes still brimming o'er  
 Just murmured Rama ! and could say no more  
 Then sudden fear made even Rama shake  
 As though his heedless foot had toucht a snake  
 How could he loôk upon that awful change  
 And bear, unmoved a sight so sad and strange !

A mighty monarch but an hour ago,  
Now a poor mourner, weak and wan with woe -  
Weeping and groaning, mad with wildering thought,  
Like the deep wave-crowned sea to frenzy wrought :  
Like the bright Sun-God labouring in eclipse,  
Or like a holy sage whose heedless lips  
Have spoken falsely    Rama's tender breast  
Knew for awhile the moon-drawn sea's unrest ,  
And pierced with sorrow for his father's sake,  
To Queen Kaikeyi, reverent, he spake

‘Tell me my fault, or plead for me and win  
His pardon, angered by my careless sin  
Why is my father, whom I ever find  
Most full of love, so silent and unkind ?  
To what sharp anguish or what care a prey  
Weeps he and sighs and turns his face away ?  
Say, has some grievous woe, some deadly ill  
Stricken his sons, or consorts dearer still ?  
Better to die than grieve a loving sire  
Death has no terror like a father's ire

Surely the source to which he owes his birth  
Must to a son be as a God on earth  
Then speak O lady speak that I may know  
What sudden grief has changed my father o

Thus Raina questioned and the greedy dame  
Gave her bold answer lost to ruth and shame  
No fault of thine thy father's soul offends  
No deadly stroke upon his house descends  
One wish he fisters to his heart most dear  
And he would tell thee but he shrinks in fear  
Thou art so fondly loved no voice has he  
To utter aught but pleasant words to thee  
Then hear his wish and as a dutious son  
Look that thy father's will be quickly done  
He though a king with most unkingly mind  
Like a mean carter of the lowest kind  
Would stint the honour and the boon deny  
He sware to grant me in the days gone by  
Faith holy faith whence all our duties spring  
Should neer be lighted by our lord the king,

Not e'en in anger, not for thy dear sake,  
May he his oath and plighted promise break.  
He will not say what promised boon I seek ,  
Before thy face he will not, dare not, speak  
Do thou but swear his promise shall not fall  
Lost to the ground, and I will tell thee all '

She ceased    Then Rama, with a troubled breast,  
These words in answer to the Queen addrest -  
'Thou needst not utter words like these to me -  
To do his will my highest joy must be  
To feed the flames my body I will throw ;  
Drink deadly poison, if his will be so ;  
Plunge in the tide if he would have it done,  
My sire, my master, and my king in one  
Then speak, O lady , with no doubting heart  
The secret longing of my sire impart.  
I swear obedience    let my word suffice,  
For tis not Rama's wout to promise twice '

Then spoke Kaikeyi to the noble youth,  
Undaunted champion of the rights of truth .

When the God aided by thy father's might  
 Waged with the fiends of yore their furious fight  
 Wounded by many a dart the Monarch fell  
 And I preserved the life I loved so well  
 Restored by me to health and strength he swore  
 To grant two boons the guardian of my care  
 And these at length I crave this day may be  
 The throne for Bharat and the woods for thee  
 Now if his honour in thine eyes be dear  
 Keep his fair fame from stain of falsehood clear  
 Go to the distant wilderness and wear  
 The hermit's mantle and the matted hair  
 Nine years and five in the wild forest stay  
 That Bharat may be lord ordained to day  
 And then this land rich in each precious thing  
 Steed car and elephant shall hail him King  
 Moved with great pity for thy mournful case  
 Thy father cannot look upon thy face  
 Come noble Prince his darling honour save  
 And firm in faith observe the oath he gave

The hero answered tranquil and sedate



That cruel speech, fell as the doom of Fate  
'Fear not, O lady, but thy wish obtain  
My father's faith shall ne'er be pledged in vain  
With hermit's mantle and with matted hair  
Forth to the woods, an exile, will I fare  
One thing alone, O Queen, I fain would learn  
Why is my lord the King to-day so stern ?  
Why is he now so silent and so cold,  
Without one smile to greet me as of old ?  
My greatest joy is ever to fulfil  
My king, my master, and my father's will,  
One only care torments my anxious breast,  
Why his own lips have not his will expressed  
Why could he not himself to me make known  
His choice of Bharat for the royal throne  
'To Bharat's hand I gladly would resign  
My bride, my life, my gold, and all that's mine  
Unaskt, most freely would I give him all  
How much more gladly 'at my father's call'  
How much more gladly when the gift may free  
His fame from blemish and give joy to thee !  
Let swiftest heralds ordered by the King,

Home from thy brother's house thy Bharat bring  
 To judge my father's words I will not stray  
 But seek the forest ere the close of day  
 There live a banisht man four years and ten  
 Keeping the promise of the king of men

His well she answered Let the herald speed  
 Carried by coursers of the fleetest breed  
 And bring my Bharat home Methinks that thou  
 Wilt brook no tarrying nor linger now  
 And if the king overwhelmed with shame could find  
 No tongue to tell thee bear not this in mind  
 But best of youths until thou hence art fled  
 Thy sire will neither bathe nor call for bread

Woe! woe! the Monarch murmured with a groan  
 Deep neath the waves of whelming anguish thrown  
 Then in exceeding grief he swooned away  
 And on the gold wrought couch all senseless lay  
 Then Rama raised him while Kaikey's tongue  
 Still urged him like a horse by lashes stung

Unmoved he answered 'Queen, I strive to do  
My duty only, like the sages true,  
Nor would I, with a soul athirst for gain,  
False to my promise, in the world remain  
All I can do to please my father, think  
Already done. from death I would not shrink.  
One duty, paramount of duties still,  
Is that a son should do his father's will  
By him unbidden, if the word thou give,  
Will I an exile in the forest live  
Couldst thou no virtue in my nature see  
That thou must crave of him, not ask of me?  
This day I go in Dandak's wilds to dwell :  
First to my mother I must bid farewell,  
And comfort Sita Thine the charge must rest  
That Bharat listen to his sue's behest,  
And keep the kingdom happy and secure.  
This is the law that ever shall endure'

In speechless woe the hapless father heard,  
And wept with bitter cry but spoke no word

Then bowing at the senseless Monarch's feet  
And stern Kaikeyi's for such love unmeet  
Once round the pair his circling steps he bent  
Then from the bower the glorious exile went.  
Him followed Lakshman sweet Sumitra's child  
With angry weeping eyes so sad and wild  
And Rama saw nor turned his eyes away  
The sacred vessels ranged for that great day  
And golden chalices whose waters shed  
O'er his young brows had sanctified his head  
He saw and round them in duo honour paced  
His eye no anguish showed his foot no haste  
Still on his brow with lofty hope o'erthrown  
Shone the great glory which was all his own  
So will the moon through the world's love retain  
Delicious splendour in the days of wane

## MOTHER AND SON.



Rama goes from the presence of his afflicted father and exulting step-mother to pay a farewell visit to Kausalya, who is full of joyful anticipations on her son's account

On to his mother's splendid bower, he went,  
And found the Queen on holy rites intent  
There oil, and rice, and humming vases stood,  
With wreaths of flowers, and curds, and cakes, and wood.  
She with her thin cheek pale with many a fast,  
And many a night in painful vigil past,  
In linen robes of purest white arrayed,  
To Lakshmi Queen of Heaven her offerings made  
Soon as she saw the darling of her soul,  
As a fond mare who springs to meet her foal

To greet her son unseen so long she flew  
 And round his neck her tender arms she threw  
 May all the glories of thy royal line  
 She cried with kisses on his brow be thine  
 Be wise and mighty like thy sires of old  
 Be good and noble proud lofty souled  
 This day thy father's faithful love is shown  
 This day he sets thee on his ancient throne

Then answered Rama Dearest lady know  
 That danger threatens fraught with mighty woe  
 My father's choice this day makes Bharat heir  
 And I must hence to Dandak's wood and there  
 Living on fruit and honey hermit's food  
 Pass twice seven dreary years in solitude

Swift as a Sal branch by the woodman lopt  
 In some primeval grove the lady dropt  
 And lay upon the ground So falls a mare  
 Beneath the load she strives in vain to bear  
 And Rama raised her up and brusht away  
 The dust that on her arm and shoulder lay

'A grief more sore,' she cried, 'I ne'er could mourn  
If thou hadst never, O my son, been born,  
Yet, well I know, their childless fate, to those  
Who pine for offspring, is the crown of woes  
I, eldest queen, to those I scorn, must bend,  
And let my rival's taunt my bosom rend  
What woman's lot can be so hard as mine,  
In endless woe and mourning doomed to pine?  
Have they not scorned me when my son was near?  
And death will follow when thou art not here  
'Twas ne'er my lot my husband's love to gain,  
And now I'm mockt by proud Kaikeyi's train,  
And those who served me once, a faithless band,  
Now far aloof in gloomy silence stand  
How shall I brook her scolding tongue to hear,  
And, better far than she, her anger fear?  
Since thou wast born ('tis seventeen years ago)  
I still have lookt to thee to end my woe  
Now what remains but shame and grief, a share  
Of trouble heavier than my soul can bear!  
How will my gloomy days go darkly by  
Without thy moon-bright face to cheer mine eye?

Alas my cares thy tender years to train  
And all my vows and fasts and prayers were vain  
Hard is my heart, or surely it had burst  
When the wild rush of sorrow reached it first  
As in the Rains no river bank can hold  
The headlong torrent from the mountains rolled  
Ah no! my death is not allowed by Fate  
Nor opens for me the Gloomy King his gate  
He will not take me to his home away  
A lion pitying his weeping prey  
Death will not listen to a wretch's cry  
Nor take his soul ere fate would have him die  
Or I bereaved of my son had fled  
To Yama's<sup>1</sup> home and been among the dead  
Why should I live without thee? I will go  
After thee Rama, though my steps be slow  
As a poor cow in her great love will run  
Watching the wanderings of her little one

While sad Kausalya wept and groined and sighed  
Thus moved with righteous anger Lakshman cried

<sup>1</sup> The Indian Pluto



'O venerable Queen, I like it not  
That Rama, victim of a woman's plot,  
Should fly an exile to the woods, and leave  
The land to languish and his friends to grieve  
The King, luxurious, doting, old, and weak,  
Will hear her voice and, as she orders, speak  
But why should Rama, pure of sin and stain,  
Flee from his kingdom to a life of pain ?  
What man could ever, deaf to duty's call,  
Forsake his godlike son beloved of all ?  
What son that father's senseless will obey,  
In second childhood 'neath a woman's sway ?  
Come, Rama, come, and ere this plot be known  
Accept my succour and secure the throne  
Before thy face what foe will dare to stand  
When thou art guarded by my good right hand ?  
Nay, like the grisly Monarch of the Dead,  
Thine eye alone will strike the bold with dread.  
Or, if thou wilt, mine arrows and my bow  
Shall lay all dwellers in Ayodhya low  
So shall the foemen find mine arm is strong ,  
The patient ever are the prey of wrong.

Nay were it not that Queen Kaikeyi's art  
 Has swayed our father and destroyed his heart  
 My voice should now his ruthless hate arraign  
 And cry The Monarch shall be shun be slain  
 Queen by this bow and by my faith I swear  
 To thy dear Rama such the love I bear  
 Come life come death our path shall be the same  
 To the wild forest or the deadly flame  
 Come try my love and let me prove my might  
 Before thy presence and in Rama's sight  
 Before my power thy woe shall flee away  
 As the night flees before the morning day

O Rama hear him thus with streaming eyes  
 Cried sad Kausalya for his words are wise  
 Wilt thou obedient to my rival's will  
 Please her who hates thee and thy mother kill?  
 If love and honour to thy sire be due  
 Hast thou no honour for thy mother too?  
 My life were woe without thee but how sweet  
 With thee dear son though grass were all my meat!

But if no prayers thy firm resolve can bend,  
I fly to death my hopeless woe to end,  
And thou thy mother's murderer, wilt bear  
The punishment of Hell and torment there'

'Forgive me, mother,' thus the hero spake,  
'I have no power my sire's command to break  
See, at thine honoured feet I bend me low.  
Once more forgive me, for I needs must go.  
Not I the first this path of duty tread.  
Of yore 'twas trodden by the mighty dead  
Now let me hear, dear Queen, thy kind farewell;  
But if I go in distant wilds to dwell,  
'Tis not for ever, mother, that I leave  
My home and thee    Again thou shalt receive  
Thy son with rapture, all his exile o'er,  
Then be thou comforted and grieve no more'  
'If thou wilt listen to no prayers of mine,  
Go forth,' she cried, 'thou best of Raghu's line'  
Go forth, my darling, and return with speed,  
And tread the path where noble spirits lead

May Virtue ever on thy steps attend  
And thee her lover from all woe defend  
May all the Gods to whom thy vows are paid  
And all the mighty saints afford their aid  
The heavenly arms that Viswamitra<sup>1</sup> gave  
Thy precious life in hours of danger save<sup>1</sup>  
Thy filial love and meek obedience arm  
Thy soul my Rama like a mystic charm<sup>1</sup>  
May every shrine where sacred grass is spread  
And every altar where the flame is led  
Lake and wild mountain bush and towering tree  
Give ready succour O my son to thee  
May Vishnu Brahma and the Sun befriend  
And all the Powers their high protection lend  
The years the seasons months and nights and day  
And hours watch over thee in all thy ways<sup>1</sup>  
Eternal Scripture and the Law revealed  
To ancient sages be thy trusty shield<sup>1</sup>  
The War God aid thee and the Moon on high  
And wise Brihaspati be ever nigh

<sup>1</sup> A saint the friend and preceptor of Rama

Thy help be Narad <sup>1</sup> and the sainted Seven,  
And the great liminary Lords of Heaven <sup>1 2</sup>  
Yea, these shall guard thee, when their praise I sing,  
The hills, the waters, and the waters' King  
The sky and ether, earth and wandering air,  
Protect thee ever with their fostering care <sup>1</sup>  
Each lunar mansion be for thee benign  
With happier light for thee the planets shine <sup>1</sup>  
Thou shalt not fear, by guardian angels screened,  
The savage giant or night-roving fiend.  
Before thy steps let cruel tigers flee,  
Let bears and lions never injure thee,  
And mighty elephants that wander wild  
Forbear to touch thy life, my noble child.  
May all thy ways be happy <sup>1</sup> may success  
With golden fruit thy hope and labour bless !  
Loved by all Gods around, above, below,  
Go forth, my son, my pride and glory, go <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A son of Brahma

<sup>2</sup> Eight Gods, Regents of the four quarters and intermediate points of the compass.

Then on his knees before her Rama fell  
Prest her dear feet and said his last farewell  
And radiant with the light her blessings lent  
To Sita's home his anxious steps he bent

## THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE.



but Rama's hardest trial yet remains, the parting from Sita his lovely and beloved wife. He briefly tells her of his altered lot, and bids her in his absence carefully discharge her duties to the Gods, his father, the three queens, the new King Bharat and his brothers. She tells him that man and wife are not thus to be parted, and declares that whithersoever he goes she will go also. In vain he sets before her the dangers and miseries that wait on banishment. Truth smiles at fear, and Love sees a Paradise in the wild with him. Rama yields to the passionate prayers of his devoted wife and allows her to accompany him to the forest.<sup>1</sup>



As through his stately halls the hero past,  
His eye was drooping and his brow o'ercast  
And Sita rose and trembled, quick to trace  
The thought and sorrow on his darkened face,

<sup>1</sup> A version of part of this scene, from Gorresio's edition of the Bengali recension of the Ramayana, has appeared, under the title of 'Sita,' in *Idylls from the Sanskrit*. The main features are the same in both, but the details slightly differ.

For his strong bosom could no longer bear  
 The load of anguish that was heavy there  
 Soon as she markt the clammy drops that hung  
 On his pale cheek she cried with faltering tongue  
 What aile thee O my lord ? This happy day  
 Should see thee joyful all but thou art gay  
 Why does no royal canopy like foam  
 For its white beauty shade thee to thy home ?  
 Where are the tuneful bard thy deeds to sing ?  
 Where are the fan that wave before the King ?  
 Why doth the city send no merry throng  
 To bring thee home with melody and song ?  
 Why doth no gilded car thy triumph lead  
 With four brave horses of the swiftest breed ?  
 No favoured elephant precede the crowd  
 Like a black mountain or a thunder cloud ?  
 No herald march in front of thee to hold  
 The precious burthen of thy throne of gold ?  
 If thou be King ordained this day then why  
 This sorry plight pale cheek and gloomy eye ?

The Sita questioned in her wild suspense



And Rama said . ‘ My father sends me hence  
An exile to the forest    hear me tell  
The story, Sita, as it all befell  
Of old, to Queen Kaikeyi, bound by oath,  
Two boons he granted    now she claims them both  
All was prepared for me    my father now  
Is forced by Duty’s mightier law to bow ,  
So Bharat sits upon the throne, and I  
For twice seven years to distant forests fly  
Only to see thee ere we part, I came  
And now, dear Sita, never praise my name  
In Bharat’s presence    others’ praise to hear  
Is néver welcome to a monarch’s ear.  
To him my father gives divided sway  
Do thou with willing love his rule obey  
With tender care the King’s desire prevent ,  
Be ever gentle, humble, and content.  
I go    be firm and strong, my noble spouse,  
Keep well thy fasts and guard thy holy vows  
Rise from thy bed when day begins to break,  
And to the Gods thy constant offerings make  
Then let the King thy duteous thoughts engage,

And cheer Kausalya worn with woo and age  
 Then to the consort-queens thy love be shown  
 They are my mothers even as mine own  
 And O forget not Rama's brothers claim  
 Loved like his life the love of Rama's dame  
 And never vex King Bharat's soul for he  
 Is lord of all the land our house and thee  
 Then here obedient to his will remain  
 Honour thy King and all thy vows maintain

Beseems she cried this speech thy royal race,  
 To thee a blot to me a foul disgrace?  
 Master of weapons lord of deadly strife  
 Hear thou the duty of a warrior's wife  
 Know that the father mother brother son  
 Obtain the lot their former deeds have won  
 The wife alone her husband's fate must share  
 And in thy trouble I my part will bear  
 For not on father mother son or friend  
 But on her husband must the wife depend  
 And if thou seek the wood thy wife has sworn  
 To smooth thy path nor let thy feet be torn

No guile is in me from thy bosom throw  
The dregs of doubt, and give me leave to go  
I spurn the terrace and the pleasant seat  
Mine be the joy to guard thy cherished feet  
Obedient ever to my parents' sway,  
I will not hearken if they bid me stay  
I will go forth, the lonely wood to roam  
The lion's dwelling and the tiger's home  
Happy and heedless, from all terror free  
Careless of empire caring but for thee  
With thee, delighted, will I wander where  
Blooms dropping honey, scent the woodland air  
Obeying thee and keeping still my vow  
I will not tremble by thy side, for thou  
Wouldst keep a stranger safe, and, sure, thine arm  
Will guard thy Son from all fear of harm  
I will not be a charge to thee sweet fruits  
'The trees will yield me, and the earth her roots  
I will go first and, treading down the grass,  
Make the way pleasant for my love to pass  
On the soft turf disclose my gathered store  
And sit and banquet when thy meal is o'er

O how I long dear lord to gaze my fill  
Guarded by thee on lake and wood and hill  
See the red lilies in their native springs  
And gay flamingoes with their rose wings  
And o'er my limbs those pleasant waters poured  
Shall banish languor O my large-eyed lord  
A thousand years would seem a single day  
If spent with thee but were my love away  
Heaven would not charm me O be sure of this  
Without my love there is no Heaven no bliss

Lost in deep thought while the hero stood  
And feared to lead her to the lonely wood  
With soothing words he strove her tears to dry  
And gently answered with a moistened eye

O virtuous daughter of a noble line  
To hear my words thy tender heart incline  
Here dutious ever still in peace remain  
*Life in the woods is naught but grief and pain*  
There roars the lion in his rocky cave  
Loud as the torrents down the hill that rave

There savage beasts in horrid ambush lie  
And rend the heedless wretch who passes by.  
Floods where the crocodile delights to play,  
And furious elephants the eye dismay.  
Then on the gale the wolf's long howl is borne  
Through a wide wilderness of sand and thorn  
On the cold ground or on a scanty heap  
Of gathered leaves the homeless wretch must sleep,  
And stay his hunger with what fruit the blast  
Hurls from the branches for his sad repast.  
A coat of bark or skin his only wear,  
Rough and untrimmed must be his matted hair  
Now on a snake the heedless foot will fall,  
Now in thy path a deadly scorpion crawl,  
And slimy reptiles creeping from the lake,  
And clouds of gnats, thy troubled slumber break.  
Enough, dear love, the wood is full of fear  
Remain, my Sita, and be happy here.'

Then Sita spoke once more with weeping eyes,  
Her voice half mastered by her sobs and sighs .

'The woe the terror all the toil and pain  
Joined with thy love to me are joy and gain  
Lion and tiger elephant and boar  
And all the monsters thou hast counted o'er  
Soon as my Rama's glorious form they see  
In trembling fear will turn away and flee.  
Not Indra's self the ruler of the sky  
Would dare to harm me when my lord is nigh  
Long years ago I heard a sage foretell  
That in the woods should be my fate to dwell  
The time is come now make that promise true  
And when thou goest take thy Sita too  
O let me go whatever I may endure  
Following thee will make my soul more pure  
So joy shall crown me in the after life  
For thou art God unto thy loving wife.  
Hear the high truth which saintly priests declare  
The after life rejoins the wedded pair  
But if thou wilt to no entreaties bend  
Poison or flood or flame my life shall end  
Fear not for me when by thy side I go  
My happy feet will never weary grow

Though wild and rough the thorny ways I tread,  
They shall feel softer than a silken bed  
When the wild wind with dust my raiment dims,  
I'll call it perfume to refresh my limbs  
And when with thee in grassy glades I lie,  
Watching the landscape with delighted eye  
Till, by thy side, I gently sink to rest  
What thing on earth shall be so richly blest?  
The fruit thy dear hand gives me there to eat,  
Little or much, shall be like amrit sweet  
Ne'er will I murmur at my lot, or grieve  
For mother, father, or the home I leave  
My food shall be wild fruit, the flower, the weed  
I will not vex thee by a word or deed  
With thee is Heaven, where'er thou art not, Hell  
O, lead me hence that I in heaven may dwell  
Then with a bitter cry her arms she flung  
Round Rama's neck, and there in anguish clung  
While from her eyes pure floods, as from a pair  
Of lotuses, poured down at every prayer

He gently held her raised her drooping head,

And stand the sweet soul that had wellnigh fled  
Not Heaven shall bribe me from my wife to part  
I knew not love the strength of thy fond heart  
And hence in doubt thy prayer I first denied  
Though naught can harm thee by thy Rama's side  
Yea, thou wast formed by Heaven to share my fate  
To soothe my sorrows and divide their weight  
As powerless I to leave my love behind  
As a high saint his pity for mankind  
And now my duty leads me far away  
My sire commands it and I must obey  
Whatever the order that my parents give  
I yield obedience or must cease to live  
No Sita not the sacrificial blaze  
True heart or liberal hand or lip of praise  
Will with such lasting joy the spirit fill  
As glad obedience to a father's will  
Come to the wood and aid my duties there  
But first at home thy helping hand prepare  
Arise dear wife nor let thy steps be slow  
Scatter our treasures quickly ere we go  
Bring forth thy corn and oil the poor to feast



Give gold and jewels to each white-robed priest,  
Gems and rich raiment, all thou hast beside,  
Among thy maidens and the men divide'

Then Lakshman's eyes with generous tears overflowed,  
As his breast laboured with its grievous load  
He with fond touch his brother's feet caressed,  
And thus the hero and his wife addressed  
'Is such the purpose of thy changeless mind?  
I with my trusty bow will walk behind  
Thy distant way through forest wilds will lead,  
Where many a bird and gallant stag may bleed  
I would not leave thee to arise a God,  
Though heaven and earth and hell obeyed my nod'

'Dear as my life, my good and faithful friend,  
Mine own dear brother,' Rama cried, 'attend  
Then were Sumitra of her hope bereft,  
And sad Kausalya with no guardian left  
He who rains gifts, as Indra rains above,  
Lies a poor captive in the snares of love ,

## THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE.

And she proud captor now a queen indeed  
Will reck but little of her rivals need.  
Tune be the sacred duty to protect  
Our honoured mothers from the Queen's neglect

O Rama, fear not Lakshman thou replied  
In Bharat's love and Bharat's care confide  
If through his crime the kingdom suffer ill  
My vengeful hand the traitor's blood shall spill  
Yea though auxiliar worlds were ranged in aid  
They should not save him be not thou afraid  
And Queen Kausalya, from her ample store  
Can raise a host like me to guard her doors  
Her thousand hamlets rich with golden grain  
Will keep her nobly and a regal train  
Turn me not back allow the earnest claim  
Which all will own and hardly thou canst blame  
I shall rejoice and thou wilt fain confess  
Thy brother's presence makes thy labour less  
For in my hand I'll bear my shafts and bow  
A spade and basket o'er my shoulder throw

I'll go before thee, and with watchful care  
The way for Sita and for thee prepare  
I'll fetch thee roots and berries, ripe and sweet,  
And the best fruits that gentle hermits eat  
Thou shalt with Sita on the slopes recline,  
And all the labour shall be only mine '

And Rama answered, joying at his speech  
'Then seek thy friends and bid farewell to each ,  
And those two bows of heavenly fabric bring  
Which Ocean's Lord erst gave Videha's King , '<sup>1</sup>  
Those death-fraught quivers, coats of steel-proof mail,  
And swords whose flashes make the sunbeams pale '

<sup>1</sup> Janaka, father of Sita.

## FAREWELL !

---

Rama his wife and brother walk through the streets crowded with mourning citizens to the palace of Dasaratha. They bid the king farewell and then leave Ayodhya amid the tears and lamentations of the people.

Their gold and gems among the Brahmans shared  
 The bows were brought, the swords and mail prepared  
 On which fair Sita with her faultless hand  
 Set here a flower there tied a silken band  
 Then to the palace walked the royal three  
 For the last time the aged king to see  
 Through crowds that filled as for a festive show,  
 Street balcony, and roof and portico

Ah ! look our hero ever wont to ride  
 Leading an army in its pomp and pride —

Now only Lakshman, faithful to the end,  
And his true wife, his weary steps attend  
Though his bright soul has known the sweets of power  
Though his free hand poured gifts in endless shower,  
Yet firm in duty, resolute and brave,  
He keeps the promise that his father gave  
And she, whose sweet face, delicately fair,  
Not e'en the wandering spirits of the air  
Might look upon, unveiling to the day  
Walks, seen of all, along the open way  
Alas, her beauty ! Ah, that tender form !  
How will it change beneath the sun and storm :  
How will the piercing cold, the rain, the heat,  
Pale her dear lips and stain her perfect feet !  
Come, all ye mourners, share his weal and woe,  
And follow Rama wheresoe'er he go  
Let us arise, our wives and children call,  
And leave our fields and gardens, homes and all  
Our houses, empty of their store of grain,  
With grass-grown courtyard and deserted lane  
Our ruined chambers, where the voice is still  
Of women singing as they turn the mill .

Groves where no children sport in thoughtless glee  
 Nor elders sit beneath the mango tree  
 The falling shop with none to buy or sell  
 The pond choked up with weeds the broken well  
 Neglected temples whence the Gods have fled  
 Overrun with rats with dust and dirt overspread  
 Where floats no incense on the evening air  
 No hum of worship and no Brahman's prayer  
 Where broken vessels strew the unswept floor  
 And the chain rusts upon the mouldering door —  
 Then let the greedy Queen Kaikeyi come  
 And triumph in her melancholy reign  
 Our town shall be a wilderness where lie  
 Our sons and lives the wood our town shall be  
 The snake shall leave his hole the bear his den  
 And settle in the empty homes of men  
 Such were the words of sorrow that the throng  
 Spoke loudly out as Rama past along  
 And his hard fate in faithful love bewailed  
 Yet not for this his lofty spirit failed

On to the palace of the King he pressed

And thus Sumantra at the gate addrest  
'I pray thee, haste and let my father know  
'That Rama craves a blessing ere he go'  
He hungered not, but hastened where the King  
Lord of the world, lay sadly sorrowing,  
Changed like the sun behind a misty cloud,  
Like the quencht flame which dust and ashes shroud,  
Like a broad lake with its sweet waters dried  
With a slow faltering voice Sumantra cried  
'Long be thy days, O King' 'Thy Rama waits,  
Thy lion-lord of men, before the gates  
His weeping friends his last farewell have heard,  
Graced with a precious gift and pleasant word  
And now he longs his father's face to see,  
And take a blessing, ere he go, of thee'

'Haste,' cried the King, 'my queens and ladies call,  
And bid my servants throng into the hall'  
Quick at the Monarch's word he called each dame,  
And half seven hundred at the summons came.  
When all were present at the King's behest,  
Rama and Lakshman in their armour drest,

Came toward the hall with anxious ladies lined  
And gentle Sita meekly came behind  
But the old King ere Rama yet was nigh  
Sprang from his throne and with a bitter cry  
Ran forth to meet him but his limbs gave way  
And falling prostrate on the ground he lay  
And Rama threw him by his father's side  
And gently called him but no voice replied  
Then with a mighty wail the hall was rent  
A thousand women in one wild lament  
Cried Rama Rama and the silver sound  
Of tinkling ornaments their wrists that bound  
The King unconscious on a couch was laid  
And weeping Sita lent her tender aid  
And with her healing care restored him then  
Rama spoke reverent to the King of men

O father thou both sire and sovereign art  
Bless me I pray thee for to-day we part  
Lakshman and Sita will not here remain  
Counsel is useless and entreaty vain



Refuse them not, but grant thy kind consent  
That they may follow as their heart is bent  
And now as kings dismiss their people, so  
Grieve not, O lord, but bless and let us go'  
He stood expecting when the King should speak  
Who answered, 'Rama, I am old and weak,  
By Queen Kaikeyi's cruel guile misled  
Rule thou Ayodhya in thy father's stead'  
And Rama cried 'A thousand years retain  
Thy sceptre, King I have no wish to reign  
I in the wild my destined years will spend,  
And clasp thy feet returning when they end  
'This populous land, which I this day resign,  
Let Bharat rule, with all its coin and kine  
And from Kaikeyi do not thou withhold  
Aught thy tongue promised in the days of old  
By thy good deeds and by thy truth I swear  
I crave not Heaven or all the glories there  
Wealth, lordship, life are worthless in mine eyes  
One thing alone above the rest I prize,  
'That thou, my King and sire, shouldst still remain  
Untoucht in honour without spot or stain

Weep not for me thy troubled bosom still  
 Nor hope with tears to change my changeless will  
 My word is pledged as well as thine for loow  
 Kaikevi prayed me and I swear to go  
 Grieve not the forest will have charms for me  
 Where sweet birds sing and wild deer wander free  
 Swift will the years of easy exile run  
 And thou once more shalt see restored thy son

Make ready and the king a mighty force  
 With cars and elephants and foot and horse  
 Equip them nobly with the utmost care  
 Silver and gold and precious gems prepare  
 Let various traders with the wealth they sell  
 Come from the city and the concourse swell  
 And singing women full of form and face  
 The royal progress of Prince Rama grace  
 Let every noble whom he counts his friend  
 Fright with precious gifts his lord attend  
 Let the best arms in many a ponderous wain  
 And skilful huntsmen follow in his train

It may be that the banisht Prince may blunt  
Each sting of memory in the eager hunt  
And, as he sucks the wild-bee's balmy spoil,  
Forget his kingdom and enjoy the toil  
Let all my gold, and boundless wealth of coin,  
To the wild forest, where he goes, be borne  
For it will sweeten the poor exile's lot  
To sacrifice in every holy spot  
To give rich offerings as he roams, and meet  
Each saintly hermit in his lone retreat'

And Rama answered 'Useless, Sire, to me  
The host, the riches, and the pomp would be  
For I, the world and all its lusts resigned,  
Have left its pride and joys and cares behind  
My home is now the wilderness, and there  
The hermit's life awaits, the hermit's fare  
Give me no banners o'er my head to float,  
All I now covet is the hermit's coat.'

And Queen Kaikeyi, with unblushing brow,  
Cried, 'See, 'tis ready take and wear it now'

The hero took it from her hand and threw  
His own fine robe upon the ground and drew  
The rough bark mantle on So Lakshman braced  
His dress removed the bark around his waist  
But modest Sita in her silks arrayed  
Eyed the strange mantle trembling and afraid  
As from Kaikeyi's hand the coat she took  
She viewed it with a startled wondering look  
As in the brake beside the stream a deer  
Looks at the hunter's snare with doubt and fear  
With weeping eyes like a poor bleating lamb  
That runs with trembling feet to find its dam  
She nestled closely to her Rama's side  
And in her soft low faltering accents cried  
Tell me how hermits dwelling in the wood  
Tie their bark mantles on Perplext she stood  
Shrinking in modest dread while one small hand  
Strove at the neck to join the rugged band

Then quickly hastening Rama first and best  
Of Virtue's children o'er her silken vest

Fastened the coat of bark    'Then rose a cry  
From all the women, and each tender eye  
Dropt water    'Rama, leave us Sita, she  
Shares not the cruel doom that falls on thee  
Hear us, we pray thee, let thy Sita stay  
To bless our sight while thou art far away'

Then spoke the Sovereign's venerable guide,  
Sainted Vasishtha, as he deeply sighed  
Looking on Sita in her coat of bark  
'O cruel Queen Kaikeyi, fell and dark  
In purpose, evil-hearted, thou disgrace  
To thy great father and thy royal race  
Deceiver of thy lord, thy plots are vain,  
For still will Sita in her home remain,  
And sit as rightful ruler on the throne  
Prepared for Rama, till he claim his own  
The pair who live in wedlock's sweet control  
Form but one heart and mind and self and soul  
She, Rama's self, shall Rama's kingdom sway,  
And we with joy her gentle rule obey

If he resolve to share her husband's woe  
 We all will follow where our lady goes  
 Our wife and children our young men and maids  
 Will roam with Rama through the forest glades  
 Nay thy son Bharat and Satruguna too  
 Will to Ayodhya bid a long adieu  
 Around their limbs the hermit girl to fold  
 And serve their elder brother as of old  
 Do thou reigning in the people's bane  
 Enjoy mid empty homes thy lonely reign  
 For tis no kingdom where our King is not  
 He make an empire in the wildest spot

Sumantra bowing with his reverent head  
 Upraised his suppliant hands to Rama and  
 My ready car O royal Prince attend  
 And where thou wilt my rapid course I bend  
 With cheerful heart her toilet task complete  
 The Rose of women rose and took her seat  
 And Rama next and Lakshman true and bold  
 Sprang on the sun bright chariot deckt with gold

<sup>1</sup> *Aravali var roha*

Sumantra, mounted, urged each willing steed  
Of noble lineage, like the wind for speed

Then rose to heaven one universal shriek ,  
And the whole city, old, young, strong, and weak  
Rusht toward the car, as, from the scorching sun,  
The panting herds to shaded water run  
Before the chariot and behind they hung,  
And cried with weeping eyes, as there they clung  
'O check thy steeds , drive slower, we implore,  
And let us see our Rama's face once more,  
His mother's heart is surely barred with steel,  
Or it had broken`with the pangs we feel  
Sita, well done ! Videha's flower and pride,  
Still, like his shadow, by thy husband's side,  
Cheering his path with thy loved presence still,  
As the sun never sets on Meru's hill '<sup>1</sup>  
And thou, O Lakshman, shalt have honour too,  
Serving thy brother with a love so true  
Yea, noblest honour for thy noble deeds,

<sup>1</sup> A sacred mountain placed by the Hindus in the centre of the seven continents of which the earth is made up. It is said to be 84,000 *yojana* high (a *yojana* is reckoned variously at four and nine miles). Its summit is the residence of the God Brahma.

For this the path to heaven and bliss that leads

Thus in their sorrow cried the weeping throng  
'Drive on' said Rama 'we delay too long'  
From the men's eyes the tears in torrents flowed  
And laid the dust upon the royal road  
While in the woe that rent their bosoms all  
The women rained their tears like drops that fall  
From the droght lotus leaves upon the lake  
Which darting fish glittering under shake.  
The King as Rama from his sight was borne  
Fell like a Sal tree by the roots upturn  
And the loud wailing cry that rent the skies  
Made Rama for a moment turn his eyes  
Where his sad mother and her train stood round  
His hapless father fainting on the ground  
Then as a young thing in the meshes caught  
Looks to its mother with a quick glance fraught  
With utter anguish bound by duty's chain  
Gazing in most intolerable pain  
One long last look of love and grief he cast  
Then urged the steeds till out of sight he part



## KAUSALYA'S LAMENT.

A

Then Queen Kausalya to her husband spake  
 With tears and sighs as though her heart would break  
 'O thou whose glories through the wide worlds reach,  
 Gentle, compassionate, and kind of speech,  
 Think, how will Sita nursed with tender care,  
 And thy two sons, then grievous hardships bear !  
 How will our darling, framed of finest mould,  
 Endure the rain and wind, the heat and cold !  
 How in the woods her tender life sustain,  
 With no sweet viands, only fruit and grain !  
 How bear the ravening lion's voice of fear,  
 She, to whom music and the song were dear !  
 Where sleeps my Rama now ? Ah ! cold his bed,  
 His arm the pillow of the Prince's head

#### KAUSALIAS LAMENT

When shall I see him with his glorious hair  
Eyed like the lotus like the lotus fair ?  
Full well I know when years are past and he  
Returns from exile to his home and me  
His brother's leavings he will scorn nor deign,  
The rightful King in Bharat's stead to reign  
The tasted morsel he will cast away  
The tiger feeds not on another's prey  
First on her lord O King the wife depends  
Next on her son and then on kin and friends  
Thy love my lord twas never mine to win  
My son is banisht, far my kith and kin  
I had but these and thou hast left me none  
Bereaved forlorn despised and all undone '

## THE HERMIT'S SON.

"But the exiles were no sooner gone than the aged monarch drooped in sadness. "Six days he sat and mourned, and pined for Rama all that weary time." In the middle of the seventh night a crime, inadvertently committed in his youth, rose up in his mind. he sought sympathy from Kausalya his first-wife, the mother of the banished Rama, and asked her to listen to his tale, for to this he attributed his present affliction." Mrs. SMITH.

Heavy was his soul within him, still in Dasaratha's breast  
 Memory of woe kept brooding and forbade the King to rest  
 Deep despair upon his spirit, mourning for his Rama, lay,  
 As when clouds have veiled the glory of the parting Lord of  
 Day  
 As he thought with bitter anguish of the deed his hand had  
 done,  
 Spake he sorrowing to Kausalya sighing weeping for her son

Art thou waking mournful lady? Give me all thy listen  
ing ear,

Hearken to a tale of sorrow to an ancient deed of fear  
Surely each shall reap the harvest of his actions here below  
Righteous deed shall bear a blessing sin shall ever bring  
forth woe

Tis a deed of youthful folly brings on me this evil day  
As a young child tasting poison eats his death in heedless  
play

Twas a day of early rain time, filling my young soul with  
love

When the sun had dried the earth-dews with his hot beams  
from above

And in highest heaven returning journeyed on his southward  
road

Speeding to the gloomy region the Departed's sad abode  
Balmy cool the air was breathing welcome clouds were float  
ing by

Humming bees with joyful music swelled the glad wild per  
cock's cry

Their wing feathers wet with bathing, birds slow flying to  
the trees

Rested in the topmost branches waving to the western breeze  
Like the Ocean many-twinkling, gold-shot with gay peacocks'  
sheen,

Gleaming with the fallen rain-drops, sea-bright all the hills  
were seen ;

While like serpents, winding swiftly, torrents from the moun-  
tain's side

Hissed along, some brightly flashing, turbid some and ochre-  
dyed

With my bow in that glad season to fair Sarju's stream I drove,  
Bent to try my archer prowess in a dark and stately grove  
There I lay in ambush hidden by the river's reedy side,  
Where the beasts that roam the forest sought at eve the cool-  
ing tide

Hark ' a sound of troubled water from the neighbouring  
stream I heard .

All was dark and still around me, not a breath the branches  
stirréd

Eager to lay low the monster forth a glittering shaft I drew ,  
Poisonous as serpent's venom from my string the arrow flew  
Then I heard a bitter wailing and a voice of direst pain  
Calling out ' Ah me, unhappy ! Dearest father, I am slain '

Writhing on the bank in anguish sobbingly one cried Ah me !  
Wherefore has this arrow smitten a poor harmless devotee ?  
Here at eve to fill my pitcher to this lonely stream I came  
Tell me whom I have offended, who my harmless act can  
blame

Who could have the heart to kill me me the guiltless her  
mit's child

Drinking from the stream and eating fruit and herbs he ga  
thers wild ?

Would the slayer strip my body ? He will find but scanty  
spoil

Coat of bark and deerskin mantle hardly will repay his toil  
Tis not for myself I sorrow from mine aged parents torn  
Long their stay and only succour to for their sad fate I  
mourn

Who will feed them when I perish ? Wretched man whose er  
thou art

Thou hast murdered father mother offspring all with one  
fell dart

Horror seized my soul within me and my mind had well  
nigh fled

In the still calm of evening as I heard the word he said

Rushing forward through the bushes on the river-bank I spied  
Lying low a young ascetic with my shaft deep in his side  
With his matted hair dishevelled, and his pitcher cast away,  
From his side the life blood ebbing, smeared with dust and  
gore he lay

Then he fixt his eyes upon me scarcely could my spirit  
brook,

As these bitter words he uttered, that long last departing look  
'Only to fetch water came I. tell me, wherefore do I bleed?  
Have I sinned against thee, Monarch? Done thee wrong in  
word or deed?

Ah! I'm not thine only victim cruel King, thy heedless dart  
Pierces too a father's bosom and an aged mother's heart  
They, my parents, blind and feeble, from this hand alone can  
drink

When I come not, thirsting, hoping, sadly down in death they  
'll sink

Naught from lore of studied Scripture, naught from penance  
do I gain,

For my hapless father knows not his dear son is lying slain  
Ah! and if he knew me dying powerless to save were he,  
As a tree can never rescue from the axe a fated tree

Hasten to him son of Raghu Tell my father of my fate  
Lest his wrath like fire consume thee Hasten ere it be too  
late

There within the shady forest is my father's hermitage  
Go entreat him son of Raghu lest he curse thee in his rage  
Thus he spake and I down kneeling drew the arrow from  
his side

Then the hermit rich in penance fixt his eyes on me and  
died

Motionless I stood in sorrow pondering in anxious thought  
How to minister most kindly to the woe my hand had  
wrought.

From the stream I filled the pitcher and fast speeding  
through the wood

Reached the middle of the forest where the lowly cottage  
stood

Talking of their son's long absence a poor aged sightless pair  
Like two birds with clipped wings helpless none to guide them  
sat they there

Sadly slowly I approached them by my rash deed left  
forlorn

[torn

Crusht with terror was my spirit and my heart with anguish



At the sound of coming footsteps thus I heard the old man  
say

'Dear son, bring the water quickly thou hast been too long  
away

Bathing in the stream or playing heedless how the minutes  
past

Come, thy mother longeth for thee Come, and cheer her heart  
at last

Be not angry, mine own darling Thou hast never vexed us yet,  
And if I have spoken harshly do forgive me and forget  
Thou art thy poor parents' succour, eyes art thou unto the  
blind

Speak, on thee our lives are resting Why so silent and un-  
kind ?'

Thus I heard, yet deeper grieving, and in fresh augmented  
woe

Spoke to the bereaved father with words faltering and slow  
'I am not thy son, O hermit, but the ruler of the land,  
Plunged with thee in woe and mourning by my own accursed  
hand

There on Sarju's bank I wandered with my arrows and my  
bow,

Bent to lay some prowling lion or a thirsty tiger low  
Then I heard a sound of drinking all the place around was  
dark

But I sent the deadly arrow Ah ! too truly to the mark  
Bounding swiftly from my ambush to the river's bank I hied  
Where a hermit's son lay dying with my arrow in his side  
Forth I drew the deadly weapon Then his last lament was  
given

To his aged helpless parents and his spirit went to heaven  
Thus thy son O saintly hermit through my haste and folly  
fell

Let deep sorrow win thy pardon for the deed I scarce can  
tell

As he heard my mournful story pouring down his aged cheek  
Came the torrent of his sorrow and his voice was low and  
weak

King hadst thou concealed this horror this blood shedding  
left untold

On thy head the sin had fallen with its fruit ten thousand  
fold

For a Warrior stained with murder of a hermit above all [fall  
from his high estate blood guilty were he Indra's self must

Lead us, King, by thee bereaved, lead us to the fatal place.  
Let us fold our darling's body in a last and long embrace'  
By the hand I led the mourners to the river where he lay  
Fondly claspt the sightless parents in their arms the death-  
cold clay

Bowed down by their load of sorrow sunk they by the dead  
boy's side,

And the sage in lamentation lifted up his voice and cried  
'Hast thou not a greeting for me? Am not I thy father, dear?  
Answer but one word, my darling Wherefore art thou lying  
here?

Art thou angry with thy father? Speak to me, beloved one!  
Surely thou wast ever dutious, look then on thy mother, son  
Come dear child, embrace thy father, put thy little hand in  
mine

Let me hear thee sweetly prattle some fond playful word of  
thine

Who will read me now the Scripture, filling my old heart  
with joy?

Who, when evening rites are ended cheer me mourning for  
my boy?

[spring?

Who will tend the helpless parents, fetch us water from the

Who will guide our feeble footsteps? Who will fruits and  
berries bring?

Can I feed thine aged mother till her weary life is o'er?

Can I soothe her ever longing for the son who comes no more?

Stay dear child nor fly so quickly to grim Yama's dark abode

Stay thy father and thy mother will go with thee on the  
road

In the wild wood all deserted none shall us in our need

Quickly will thine aged parents tread the path for all decreed

Guiltless boy by sinners murdered join thine own immortal  
band

In the heaven of slaughtered heroes slain on earth by other  
hand

Hasten to thy blissful mansion welcome shalt thou be to  
those

Who fell nobly here in battle with their bold front to their  
foes

Then the funeral rites were finish'd by the parents' loving  
care

And again the sage address'd me as I stood a suppliant there

Thou hast slain my well beloved I'll feed mine only child O  
king

Kill me too, the childless father    death no longer has a sting.  
But thou shalt not go unpunisht    Wretched youth, thy  
          breast shall know

Somewhat of the pangs I suffer, a bereaved father's woe

Thus I lay my curse upon thee    for this slaughter done  
          to-day

Thou for a dead son shalt sorrow, and thy life the debt shall  
          pay '

## THE TRIAL OF TRUTH

---

After Dasarath's death Bharata refused to accept the insignia of royalty which according to Hindu law was the heritag of his elder brother. We not told how his mother behaved when he thus refused to aid her wicked schemes for his advancement but the Council resolved that if he would not be King himself he must go in pursuit of Rama, and persuade him to return and assume the sovereignty. The meeting between the brothers shows the utmost delicacy and generosity of feeling. Bharata lamenting his mother's ill conduct, and entreating Rama to return. Rama declining because unless he keeps his father's vow he cannot secure his father's happiness. In the end he therefore adjures his brother to return to Ayodhya and console the people and the twice-born. I with Sita and Lakshman will enter the forest of Dandaka. Be thou the King of men I will be sovereign of wild beasts. Let the umbrella shade thy head I will take refuge in the shade of the wood.

MRS BREWSTER *Life in Ancient India*

Urge me no more thy words are fair  
 But virtue's garb they falsely wear  
 With pleasing art thy tongue misleads  
 And lures me to ignoble deeds

For what is might or ancient race,  
The pomp of wealth, the pride of place ?  
'Tis virtue marks the line between  
The great and good, the low and mean  
And he from virtue's path who strays  
To wander in forbidden ways,  
Whate'er his birth, must hope in vain  
The praises of the good to gain  
Shall I the righteous path forsake,  
The laws of duty foully break ?  
Be scorned by all the good and just,  
And lay mine honour in the dust ?  
Shall Rama stain his soul with sin,  
And lose the heaven he lives to win ?  
Nor would the crime with Rama end  
For countless lives on him depend  
The people in their Prince behold  
Their best example, guide, and mould,  
And, by his vice or virtue led,  
The path he walks they strive to tread  
That truth and mercy still must be  
Beloved of kings, is Heaven's decree

## THE TRIAL OF TRUTH

Upheld by truth the monarch reigns  
Nay truth the very world sustains  
Truth evermore has been the love  
Of saints below and Gods above  
And endless bliss by truth is won  
In Brahma's world beyond the sun  
For holy truth is root and spring  
Of virtue and each lovely thing  
A mighty Lord supreme on earth  
Perfect for beauty power and worth  
A crown of glory still more fair  
Than sacrifice and praise and prayer  
Shall I thus heavenly goods despise  
Attracted by an earthly prize  
Shall I mislead by lust of sway  
My father's order disobey  
And falsely duped or passion-led  
Force him to break the oath he gave  
Shall I to gain my royal right,  
The clear command of duty slight  
With lying lips my glory stain  
And boldly sin for paltry gain?



For not alone by hand and thought  
The soul of man with crime is fraught  
Sin's meanest tool I count the third,  
The tongue that speaks the lying word.  
No, brother , urge this plea no more,  
I still will keep the oath I swore .  
Within the forest calmly dwell,  
Contented with my hermit's cell,  
Nor fail to give the Gods a share  
Of offerings from my humble fare'

## CHITRAKUTA

---

Rama with Sita and Lakshman has crossed the Gange and the Jumna and reached the distant forest in which he is to live. He points out to Sita some of the beauties of the surrounding scenery especially the mountain Chitrakuta and the river Mandakini.

Though reft of power and kingly sway  
Though friends and home are far away  
I cannot mourn my altered lot  
Enraptured with this lovely spot  
Look darling on this noble hill  
Which sweet birds with their music fill  
Tinged with a thousand metal dyes  
His lofty summits kiss the skies  
Here gleams a line of silvery sheen  
There a broad streak of emerald green,

And next a belt of gold is spread, .  
Made glorious by a fringe of red ,  
While, higher as the peaks ascend,  
Sunlight and flowers and crystal blend  
See, dear, the trees that clothe his side,  
All lovely in their summer pride,  
In richest wealth of leaves arrayed,  
With flower and fruit and light and shade  
Look where the young Rose-apple glows ,  
What loaded boughs the Mango shows !  
See, waving in the western wind,  
The light leaves of the Tamarind ,  
And mark that giant Peepul through  
Those feathery clumps of tall Bamboo  
That depth of shade, that open lawn,  
Allure the wood-nymph and the faun ,  
And, where those grassy glades extend,  
The spirits of the air descend  
To while the summer night away  
With dalliance and mirth and play  
Look, from the mountain's woody head  
Hangs many a stream like silver thread,

Till gathering strength each rapid rill  
Leaps lightly laughing down the hill  
Then bounding o'er the rocky wall  
Flashes the foamy waterfall.  
O lives there one too cold to feel  
Delicious languor o'er him steal  
As the young morning breeze that spring  
From the cool cave on balmy wings  
Breathes round him loaded with the scent  
Of bud and blossom dew besprent !  
See round the hill at random thrown  
Those masses of primeval stone  
Of every shape and many a hue  
Yellow and black and red and blue  
But all is fairer still by night  
Each rock reflects a softer light  
When the whole mount from foot to crest  
In robes of lamhent flame is drest  
When from a million herbs a blaze  
Of their own luminous glory plays  
And clothed in fire each deep ravine  
Each pinnacle and crag is seen

Dear Sita, Chitrakuta's height  
Transports me with such pure delight,  
With thee and Lakshman here to dwell  
For many a year would please me well'

## MANDAKINI

Home of the heron and the swan  
     See the fair river glides  
 With verdant isles to gem her breast  
     And flowers to deck her sides  
 With every tree of sweetest fruit  
     And fairest bloom that springs  
 And glorious as the lucid stream  
     Where bathes the King of Kings<sup>1</sup>  
 How lovely are those shelving banks  
     Now dotted o'er with deer  
 That sully as they quench their thirst  
     The waves that were so clear

<sup>1</sup> A title of *Ishvara* the God of Wealth. The beauty of his pleasure grounds is proverbial.

Look, darling, to that point below,  
    Those holy hermits mark  
I know them by their matted hair  
    And by their coats of bark  
See, on the river bank they stand,  
    Their early bathing done,  
Lifting their aged hands in prayer  
    They reverence the sun  
O look ' the merry wind is up  
    And scatters leaves around  
The very mountain seems to dance  
    With bending forests crowned  
Behold the wavelets white with foam  
    As round the isles they whirl,  
Here troubled by the bathing saints,  
    And there like orient pearl  
Look, scattered by the morning breeze  
    What beds of blossoms lie,  
And chaplets, cast upon the wave,  
    Are dancing swiftly by  
Hark to the wild-duck's merry call  
    Amid the reeds at play :

Hark to the joyous mallard's note  
    Responsive far away  
My life in fair Ayodhya's town  
    Was not so sweet to me  
As gazing on this lovely flood  
    That glorious hill and thee  
Bathe in the gentle stream to her  
    With friendly love repair  
And pluck her lilies in thy play  
    And twine them in thy hair  
This mount with all its savage life  
    Ayodhya's city deem  
And on this beauteous river look  
    As our own Sarju's stream  
O Sita I am wild with joy  
    So rare a lot is mine  
Cheered by a duteous brother's care  
    And loved with love like thine



## THE RAPE OF SITA.



"Ravana, finding it in vain to hope to succeed without the aid of strata gem, took with him an assistant sorcerer, disguised as a deer, and as Rama took great pleasure in the chase, it was not difficult for the deer to lure him from his cottage in pursuit. He did not leave his beloved Sita without charging Lakshman, his brother, to remain in charge, but the wily deer knew how to defeat his precaution, and when transfixed by Rama's arrow he cried out in the voice of Rama, "Oh, Lakshman, save me!" Sita heard the cry, and entreated Lakshman to fly to his brother's rescue. He was unwilling to go, but yielded to her earnestness and she was left alone." Mrs. SPEIR, *Life in Ancient India*

As, when the sun and moon their empire leave,  
 Black night descends upon the widowed eve,  
 So Ravan, watching for the lovely prize  
 His form concealed in roaming Brahman's guise—  
 Drewnear to Sita, in the cottage left,  
 Far from her guardians, of all aid bereft

All life was hush'd, and as the fiend came near  
No leaflet stirred the wind was still through fear  
And his red eye held powerless to flee  
The trembling waters of Godaver  
Unholy guest in holy guise he came  
Close to the side of Rama's mourning dame  
Like a dark well with treacherous weeds o'ergrown  
Like Saturn when his baleful rays are thrown  
Upon the fairest star of all the sky  
Thus the night-rover with his evil eye  
Looked on the lonely lady as she wept  
Within her leafy home. Awhile he kept  
His gaze upon her beauty for it fed  
Upon the splendour of white teeth the red  
Of luscious lips, the light of eyes that through  
Their long soft lashes moistened with the dew  
Of weeping glorified a face fair browed  
Pure as the moon shining without a cloud

Then Ravan cried pierced by Love's fiery dart  
Speak marvellous beauty tell me who thou art

All lonely here, in silken robes arrayed,  
Wearing a lotus wreath thy brows to shade  
What heavenly being do mine eyes behold,  
Fairer and brighter than the finest gold ?  
Fame ? Beauty ? Modesty ? No less I ween,  
Or sweet Desire, young Love's voluptuous queen ?  
Red are thy lips, thy teeth are small and white,  
Thy tender eyes are large and soft and bright  
No child of earth could wear a smile so sweet,  
And O, the wonder of thy perfect feet !  
Robes cannot hide the glories of thy breast,  
And fancy faintly pictures all the rest  
Sweet Queen, these eyes have never seen till now  
Sylph, nymph, or Goddess half so fair as thou  
This savage wood befits thee, lady, ill,  
Where wild fiends roam, changing their form at will  
On some smooth terrace should thy couch be spread,  
In gardens sweet with blooms thy feet should tread  
A royal robe thy peerless form should deck,  
And priceless gems sparkle upon thy neck  
The choicest wreath should bind thy glorious hair,  
A matchless lord thy bed of love should share

Who art thou Goddess? but no heavenly maid  
Loves this wild wood beneath this gloomy shade  
No nymph or gentle spirit seeks to roam  
This is the giant's haunt the lion's home  
Dost thou not dread so delicate and fair  
The tiger near thee and the wolf and bear?  
Whoso and who art thou? Tell me, whence and why  
Thou comest hither with no guardian nigh

He ceased The lady by his garb beguiled  
With fearless innocence looked up and smiled.  
She bade the seeming Brahman to a seat  
And gave him water for his weary feet  
And still intent on hospitable care  
Brought forth the choicest of her woodland fare  
She by the cottage-door expecting stood  
To see her lord returning through the wood  
But naught save boundless trees her gazes met  
Rama and Lakshman lingering came not yet.  
And then she told him what he sought to know  
Her name her lineage all her weal and woe

The Monarch's promise, and Kaikeyi's hate,  
The fatal oath, and grief that came too late.  
'And now,' she said, 'declare thy name and race,  
'And why thou roamest to this lonely place'

.      She spoke      The stranger thundered in reply ·  
'Terror of men and Gods and worlds am I,  
Ravan, whose will the gaint hosts obey  
Since I have seen thee, lovely one, to-day,  
Clad in silk raiment, bright as polisht gold,  
My love for all my wives is dead and cold  
Though countless dames of perfect beauty, torn  
From many a pillaged realm, my home adorn,  
Come, fairest, come, my queen and darling be  
Among a thousand I will love but thee  
My city Lanka like a glittering crown  
Looks from the high brow of a mountain down  
On restless Ocean, who with flash and foam  
Beats in wild rage against mine island-home  
There pleasant gardens, shall thy steps invite  
With me to wandér when the moon is bright ,

There in new joys thy breast shall ne'er retain  
One faint remembrance of this place of pain

Then from her breast the noble fury broke  
With flashing eye and quivering lip she spoke .  
' Me me the faithful wife of Rama him  
Before whose glory Indra's fame is dim  
Rama, who quails not in the battle shock  
Fierce as the Ocean, stedfast as the rock  
Rama, the lord of each auspicious sign  
Rama, the glory of his princely line  
Me Rama's wife the dear fond wife of him  
Him of the eagle eye the lordly limb—  
Me dost thou dare with words of love to press  
A jackal suing to a lioness ?  
As far above thine impious reach am I  
As yonder sun that blazes in the sky  
Ha thou hast seen those air-drawn trees of gold  
That sign of doom which dying eyes behold  
If thou hast ventured weary of thy life  
To look with eyes of love on Rama's wife

Fool ! thou hadst better strive to rend away  
The serpent's venom'd fang, the lion's prey ;  
To steal the Blessed Tree that blooms on high,  
To drink fell poison and not fear to die  
Fool ! with a needle's point thine eye to prick ;  
Fool ! with thy tongue a razor's edge to lick  
Thou, tempt the wife of Rama ! Better leap,  
A millstone round thy neck, from Lanka's steep  
Into the raging sea and strive to swim  
From shore to shore than tempt the wife of him  
Thou, win his wife ! With lighter labour try  
To pluck the sun and moon from yonder sky ,  
Safer to wrap within thy robe the flame  
Than woo to folly Rama's faithful dame  
As the vast ocean to a trickling rill,  
As Meru's mountain to the meanest hill ,  
The Feathered Monarch to the skulking bat,  
The lordly lion to the crawling cat  
As sandal perfume to the common mire ,  
As gold found perfect by the testing fire  
To homely iron and dull lumps of lead  
As the gay peacock, with his plumes outspread,

To the shy moping solitary owl  
As the proud swan is to the meanest fowl  
That dips his wings unnoticed in the sea —  
So is my Rama to a thing like thee

Out burst the giant, with a furious frown  
Hast thou not heard of Ravana's high renown ?  
No'er heard the glory and the might of me  
Before whose face celestial armies flee ?  
Whom all the Gods with Indra at their head  
Fear like the ruthless Monarch of the Dead  
Before whose eye the sun and moon grow pale  
And silent horror checks the shuddering gale  
That every leaflet on the tree is still  
Husht every ripple of the babbling rill.  
Beyond the sea my glorious city stands  
Lanka the famous raised by giant hands  
Like Indra's city beautiful and bright  
With golden walls and gates of lazulite  
There every flower of rarest odour blows  
And luscious fruit on loaded branches glows



There is the sound of cymbal and of drum  
Tarry not, Sita, but arise and come '  
Come, and with me all earthly pleasures share ;  
Nay, heavenly joys, my love, shall bless thee there '

He ceased , and, changing all his gentle guise,  
Stood before Sita in his native size,  
A monstrous giant, terrible in form,  
Dark as a thunder-cloud that leads the storm  
Ten-faced and twenty-armed, in every head  
Glared the wild eyeballs that his rage made red,  
As with a scowl upon each haughty brow,  
He cried . ' Fair Sita, wilt thou scorn me now ?  
Lift thy sweet eyes, dear child of earth, and see  
A husband worthy of a queen like thee.'  
One eager hand her glorious tresses graspt,  
One mighty arm around her waist was claspt  
And hei, ye Spirits ! Ah, all wild with dread  
Each nymph and faun before the fiend had fled  
Where, where is Rama ? Rama roams afar,  
And Ravan bears hei to his magic car

With angry threats the giant tried to still  
Her cries for aid but very long and shrill  
Rang forth her lamentation through the air  
As of one raving in her great despair  
Help Rama, help ! O Lakshman where art thou ?  
Why faithful champion art thou heedless now ?  
My hero wont the giants pride to tame  
Tear from their impious hands thy brother's dame !  
She who drove Rama from his promised throne  
Will doubly triumph when this deed is known  
Ye happy bowers ye bloomy groves farewell !  
My mournful fate to royal Rama tell !  
And thou Godaven dear stream upon  
Whose bosom float the mallard and the swan  
Forget not her who loves thee but relate  
To royal Rama Sita's mournful fate  
Ye gentle fauns to whom this wood is dear  
Let Rama from your airy voices hear  
That Ravan tears me hence ! On you on all  
The countless life within these shades I call  
Say that the fiend has borne away his wife  
His own true Sita dearer than his life ,

He will regain the spouse he loves so well,  
Yea, if they bore her to the depths of Hell'

Down to her feet her loosened tiesses hung,  
As, like a creeper, with twined arms she clung  
To bough and branch, and falling on her knees  
Slunked out for succour to the mighty trees  
Then Ravan's giant hand, unused to spare,  
Seized her again by her long flowing hair  
Vengeance on thee that cursed touch shall bring,  
And stain with gore thy hair, thou impious King  
All nature trembled, faint and sick with dread,  
And sudden darkness o'er the world was spread ,  
The wind was hushed, dimmed was the glorious sun ,  
An awful voice that cried, 'The deed is done,  
Burst from the mighty Sire, whose sleepless eye  
Saw the fell outrage from his throne on high ,  
And the pure saints, with mingled joy and awe,  
Looked on the sinner and his doom foresaw  
In vain she struggled, as the giant threw  
His arm around her waist and upward flew

With yellow robes far floating uncontrolled  
And fair limbs glowing like the burnisht gold  
The royal lady like the lightning shone  
Too dazzling lovely to be looked upon  
Touched by the glorious light the giant's frame  
Showed like a mountain belted round with flame  
And from the lotus wreath that crowned her head  
Light falling petals on his limbs were shed  
Widowed of Rama and of joy her face  
Peered in its lovely sadness from the embrace  
Of her fell ravisher    So looks the moon  
With pure light cleaving a dark cloud in June

## RAMA'S DESPAIR.



Rama returns to his cottage and finds it empty Sita, his love, his life, is gone He had borne the loss of father, mother, home, and friends, but beneath this shock the hero's reason gives way.

Then Rama turning, with love-quicken'd pace,  
 Eager to look upon his Sita's face,  
 Came to his dwelling But he found her not ,  
 Lonely and empty was the leafy cot,  
 Like a sad streamlet in the winter's frost  
 With all the glory of its lilies lost  
 He searcht, he called no answering voice was heard,  
 But a faint shudder that the branches stirred ,  
 And sad with woe each tree and bird and flower  
 Mourn'd round the ruin of the lady's bower ,

And nymph and faun in shady thickets sighed

And Rama lifted up his voice and cried  
Where is my darling? Dead or torn away?  
Or has she ventured in the wood to stray  
Gathering flowers farther and farther still?  
Or has she sought the stream her jar to fill?  
Through grove and glade he ran with maddened brain  
Seeking her wildly where all search was vain  
From brook to brook from hill to hill he ran  
Each tree to question and each lawn to scan  
Tell me Acaena, has that fairest she  
Who loved thy flowers so well been seen by thee?  
Clad in pale silk and like thy clusters fair  
If thou hast seen my darling tell me where!  
Thou Bel tree laden with thy golden fruit  
Round as my lady's breast, why art thou mute?  
Where is she Heartsease? 'Tis thy gentle part  
To banish woe come give me what thou art  
Thou Cassia brilliant with thy pendent gold  
Tell me what shades my radiant Sita hold

Palm, Mango, Jasmine, Amaranth, declare,  
Where is my darling with the long soft hair ?  
It may be that my fawn-eyed love has strayed  
To sport with fawns beneath some arching shade.  
I see thee dearest come, no longer seek  
To hide thee in the grove, come forth or speak !  
I see thee, lady of the lotus eye,  
Thou art not hidden, and 'tis vain to fly.  
Stay if thou lovest me, my Sita, stay !  
Too much already of this cruel play  
I see thy garment shimmer in the brake  
Stay, my sweet darling, for dear pity's sake !

Ah ! she is dead, her mangled limbs the feast  
Of wandering giant or some ravenous beast,  
That moon-bright cheek, that pure and polished brow,  
Red lips and dazzling teeth what are they now ?  
Tossing her arms her spray-soft arms in vain,  
Shrieking for help, alas ! my love was slain.  
Why wast thou left within thy bower alone,  
For fiends to rend thee, oh, mine own, mine own ?

My Sita lost I will not live but go  
 Hence to the after world weighed down by woe  
 The mighty King our sire will see me there  
 And sternly cry False perjured Rama where  
 Where is thy faith that thou with evil speed  
 Comest from exile ere the time decreed ?  
 Can I return from banishment to see  
 Those chambers empty where my queen should be ?  
 Can I return to hear my people cry  
 Shame on the wretch who failed to save or die ?  
 How can I meet Vidisha's King and brook  
 The speechless agony of the father's look ?  
 How will these lips endure to tell him all ?  
 These eyes to see him start and faint and fall ?  
 Now leave me here to mourn awhile and die  
 Do thou dear brother to Ayodhya hie  
 The beautiful city, thus to Bharat say  
 With tender greeting Rama bids thee sway  
 The righteous sceptre thou deservest well  
 Then after reverent salutation tell  
 With soothing words my mother his and thine  
 The mournful tale of Sita's fate and mine



## SITA IN PRISON.



As some poor solitary deer,  
 When eager dogs are pressing near,  
 Lies sobbing in an alien wood  
 Far from her soft-eyed sisterhood,  
 So in King Ravan's hall, a prey  
 To fear and anguish, Sita lay  
 With none to aid her in distress,  
 Cirt round by many a giantess

Pierced by the shaft of Love, the King  
 Strode to the centre of the ring  
 He bade the captive lady rise,  
 And, lifting up her streaming eyes,  
 View all the glorious house that vied  
 With heavenly homes in pomp and pride

Hall bower and chamber bright with throngs  
Of gay robed dames and cheered with songs  
Of countless birds whose swelling throats  
Blent sweetly their delicious notes  
From gold and crystal pillars bright  
With studs of pearl and lazulite  
Near lay a royal garden fair  
With terrace lawn and gay parterre  
Where roses glowed and peacocks played  
Delighted in the Mango's shade  
Like cloudy pile in skies of June  
That hides the path of sun and moon  
Or soaring up like Meru's head  
All flaming with the morning's red  
So vast so high that palace raised  
Sky-cleaving pinnacles and blazed  
In the sun's path from floor to spire  
A hape of beauty clothed in fire

He led her up the stair whereon  
Inlaid in gold large diamonds shone

And to her eyes that marked not showed  
The glory of his rich abode  
The lattice with its ivory frame,  
Where softened light through silver came ,  
And curtains, bound with golden braid,  
Cast on the floor a rosy shade  
The car, obedient to his will,  
That bore him over flood and hill  
Long galleries and stately halls  
Where pictures lived upon the walls  
The mazy rill that murmured round  
The grotto and the pleasure-mound  
Pools where the lily flushed, the lake  
Where played the cygnet and the drake  
Thus with delight, from view to view,  
The undelighted dame he drew,  
And, as she trembled by his side,  
' Look, Sita ' at each step he cried  
' Now, fair one, learn my power and might  
Ten million Rovers of the Night,  
And lesser fiends, a countless band,  
Millions of millions, round me stand,

Who joy in fight and scorn to fly  
Of all this host sole lord am I  
Whoso army is so vast and bold?  
What king so rich in gems and gold?  
What earthly city can compare  
With Lanka fairest of the fair?  
To thy sweet hand I yield the whole  
O dearer than my life and soul  
Thousands of women wait my sign  
O large-eyed be their queen and mine  
My earnest prayer no longer spurn  
For Love's hot fires within me burn  
Sea-girt three hundred leagues in length  
My Lanka lies and if tho strength  
Of heavenly hosts her walls assail  
Though Indra lead their might would fail  
No spirit of the earth or air  
No God can with my strength compare  
No longer let thy fancy dwell  
On Rama in his hermit cell  
Leave the poor mortal to his fate  
And wed thee with a worthier mate

Thy youth will not for ever stay,  
Come, use it ere it glide away.  
Nor let vain hopes thy breast beguile  
Of rescue from the Giants' isle  
Less vain the toil that sought to tame  
The glory of the quenchless flame  
Less vain the toil that strove to bind  
The gale that wanders swift as inind  
Man, fiend, or God would find it hard  
To rescue thee whom I would guard  
Spurn not, fair Queen, a realm like this,  
But dwell with me and reign in bliss  
Thy hermit life has washed away  
What stain upon thy bright soul lay .  
Now come, with me enjoy the meed  
Of each high thought and noble deed  
What ' still reluctant, cold, and coy,  
Still loving grief and hating joy '  
Hear, lady of the faultless brow,  
Ravan ne'er stooped so low till now  
Down at thy perfect feet I kneel,  
And pity beg for all I feel .

My head beneath thy feet I crave  
Some mercy for thy loving slave

My large-eyed Rama dear to fame  
Of mighty arm and lion frame  
And Lakshman, will not tarry long  
But slay thee though thy walls are strong  
Soon will he hurry on thy track  
And with thy life take Sita back.  
Small aid gainst him thy hosts will bring  
Like snakes seized by the Feathered King  
Though they be terrible and fierce  
Thou arrows from his bow will pierce  
Thy body through from flank to flank  
As Ganga rends away the bank  
Though girt by hosts of demon shape  
Thou canst not from his hand escape  
Thou when he holds thee with his eye  
Scorcht with his shafts shalt fall and die  
He who can dry the mighty deep  
May bid poor Sita moan and weep

But the great sun shall cease to shine  
Ere her pure soul to sin incline  
Repent, ere yet it be too late,  
The crime thy death shall expiate,  
Or soon shall seas of blood be spilt,  
And widowed Lanka mourn thy guilt  
When Rama's shaft has laid thee low,  
Far other words thy tongue shall know .  
Thou scarcely then wilt boast in pride  
That thou hast torn me from his side  
He comes, and 'neath his anger all,  
Thyself, thy host, thy town shall fall.  
I spurn thee. can the altar dight  
With vessels for the sacred rite,  
O'er which the priest his prayer has said,  
Be sullied by an outcast's tread ?  
My body lies within thy power .  
Torture it, chain it, kill, devour ,  
Ne'er will I meet thy base desire,  
Or lay mine honour in the mire'

With looks of fury Ravan cried, ,

Come Ogresses and tame her pride  
He spoke and quicker than the word  
The coming of the fiends was heard  
Shuddered the air as on they sped  
And the earth shook beneath their tread  
Before their lord they humbly bowed  
And pressed round Sita in a crowd  
To the Asoka garden bear  
My prize he cried and guard her there  
Until her stubborn pride be bent  
By mingled threat and blandishment  
See that ye watch her well and tame  
Like some wild thing the haughty dame  
They bore her to that garden bright  
With every flower that charms the sight  
Where sweet streams under branches flowed  
And fruit through all the seasons glowed  
Prostrate before those fiendish eyes  
Like a poor trembling deer that lies  
Beneath a tiger's paw she lay  
Thinking of Rama far away



## RAMA IN THE SPRING



“ I sought thee there,

And, mourning for my darling, scarce could bear  
The sweet cool smell of lakes and pleasant showers,  
The beauty and the perfume of the flowers,  
And all delights of sight, and sound, and smell,  
For, without Sita, Heaven itself were Hell ”

KALIDASA.

‘ Look, brother, at that grove,’ he cried,  
‘ That lines sweet Pampa’s shelving side  
Those trees of giant girth that rear  
Their heads so high, like hills appear  
These are the pleasant days that fire  
The youthful bosom with desire ,

When soft winds breathing balm dispenso  
Wood odours that enthrall the sense  
And pour a ceaseless rain of flowers  
As drops the cloud his summer showers  
Look even as I speak my head  
Is covered with the blooms they shed  
How soft the west wind moves along  
To music of the wild bee's song,  
His breath is of the woodland spring  
The sandal's odour lades his wing  
Look up there hardly glimmers through  
These arching trees one speck of blue  
Look there the Cassia's bloom behold  
A giant clad in burning gold.  
O happy spring whom birds rejoice  
To welcome with their gladdest voice!  
O happy time but not to me  
For I am wandering far from thee,  
My darling of the large soft eye  
That Koil with his loud shrill cry  
Of joy and freedom and desire  
That the first days of spring inspire

Seems calling, as he cheers his mate,  
To me all lone and desolate '  
See, where the joyous mallard leads  
His partner through that fringe of reeds  
Each happy bird, as I none alone,  
Hails the spring air with gladdest tone,  
All revelling in bliss alike,  
The swan, the hawk, the dove, the shrike  
Look, brother, in that shady glen  
The peacock dances round his hen .  
No giant's hand has reft away  
The mate with whom he loves to play  
There, round the Mango blossom, press  
Wild bees, with lovers' eagerness  
But Ah ! the blissful life around,  
Each lovely sight, each pleasant sound,  
Pierces my very heart, and slays  
With memory of perisht days,  
That flew in heavenly rapture by  
With Sita of the roc-deer's eye "

' 1 "Thou 'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird  
That sings beside thy mate" BURNS

## TIDINGS OF SITA

---

As on the breezy hill I stood  
 That rises o'er the pathless wood  
 High o'er me flew a monstrous form  
 Dark as the cloud that heralds storm  
 I saw the giant's flashing eye  
 I heard a woman's piteous cry  
 A voice from out the still air came  
 Of weeping mixt with Rama's name  
 A dove whom eagle talons grasp  
 She struggled in the giant's clasp  
 I heard again a wilder shriek  
 She saw me on the mountain peak

An anklet from her foot she drew,  
And with it cast her garland too  
The token I have guarded well  
Some tidings of thy love may tell'

Quick to the mountain cave he went,  
And brought the treasured ornament  
Then burst the tear from Rama's eyes,  
As, gazing on the well-known prize,  
'O Sita, O my love!' he said,  
Then swooned and fell as fall the dead

## RAVAN'S PALACE

---

Hanuman the son of the Wind God and the ally of Rama, enters Lanka by night in search of Sita. There he sees Pushpaka, the magic car which sustains the palace of the King of the Giants.

Then sweetly to his ear were borne  
 The blended notes of drum and horn  
 Cymbal and tabour deep and loud  
 Like thunder from a distant cloud  
 Awhile he stood then nearer drew  
 Till flash'd upon his startled view  
 The car of Ravana long and wide  
 A measured league from side to side  
 The car that flew o'er flood and lull  
 Obedient to the master's will.

Its jewelled arches high o'erhead  
An ever-changing lustre shed  
From ruby, pearl, and every gem,  
On golden pillars under them  
Delicious came the tempered air  
That breathed a heavenly summer there,  
Stealing through bloomy trees that bore  
Each pleasant fruit in endless store  
Enclosed within that pearly bound,  
The wondering chief a palace found,  
Of vast extent and stately height  
With doors of gold and lazulite,  
And deckt with every lovely thing,  
The mansion of the Giant King  
No check was there from jealous guard,  
No door was fast, no portal barred,  
Only a sweet air breathed to meet  
The stranger, as a host should greet  
A wanderer of his kith and kin,  
And woo his weary steps within  
He stood within a spacious hall  
With fretted roof and painted wall,

The grant Ravan's boast and pride  
 Loved even as a lovely bride  
 I were long to tell each marvel there  
 The crystal floor the jewelled stair  
 The gold the silver and the slane  
 Of chrysolite and almandine  
 Here breathed the fairest blooms of spring  
 Here flash'd the proud swan's silver wing  
 The splendour of whose feathers broke  
 Through fragrant wreaths of aloe smoke  
 'Tis Indra's Heaven the chieftain cried  
 Gazing in joy from side to side  
 The home of all the Gods is this  
 The mansion of eternal bliss!  
 There were the softest carpets spread  
 Delightful to the sight and tread  
 Where troops of fairest women lay  
 Overcome by sleep fatigue'd with play  
 The cup no longer checked the feast  
 The sound of revelry had ceased  
 The tiring feet no longer stirred  
 No clinking of a zone was heard



So when each bird has sought her nest,  
And swans are mute and wild bees rest,  
Sleep the fair lilies of the lake  
Till the sun's kiss shall bid them wake  
Like the calm field of autumn's sky  
Which stars unnumbered glorify,  
So shone the tyrant's sumptuous room  
With living stars that chased the gloom  
'These are the stars,' the chieftain cried,  
'In summer nights that earthward glide ;  
In brighter form they re appear  
To shine in matchless lustre here,'

With wondering eyes awhile he viewed  
Each graceful form and attitude  
One lady's head was backward thrown,  
Bare was her arm and loosed her zone.  
The garland that her brow had graced  
Hung closely round another's waist  
Here gleamed two little feet, all bare  
Of anklets that had sparkled there

Here lay a queenly dame at rest  
In all her glorious garments drest.  
There slept another whose small hand  
Had loosened every tie and band  
In careless grace another lay  
With gems and jewels cast away  
Like a young creeper when the tread  
Of the wild elephant has spread  
Destruction and confusion round  
And hurled it flowerless to the ground  
Here lay a slumberer still as death  
Save only that her balmy breath  
Raised ever and anon the lace  
That floated o'er her sleeping face  
There sunk in sleep an amorous maid  
Her sweet head on a mirror laid  
Like a fair lily bending till  
Her petals float upon the rill  
Another black-eyed damsel pressed  
Her lute upon her heaving breast  
As through her happy arms were twined  
Round him for whom she long had pined.

Another pretty sleeper round  
A silver vase her arms had wound,  
That seemed so fresh and fair and young  
A wreath of flowers that o'er it hung

In sweet disorder lay a throng  
Weary of dance and play and song  
Where heedless guls had sunk to rest,  
One pillowed on another's breast,  
Her tender cheek scarce seen beneath  
Red roses of the falling wreath,  
The while her long soft hair concealed  
The beauties that her friend revealed  
With limbs at random interlaced  
Round arm and leg and throat and waist,  
That wreath of women lay asleep  
Like blossoms in a careless heap

## KUMBIHAKARNA



Kumbhakarna the gigantic brother of the Titanic Varan—named for the size of his ears which could contain Kumbha or large water-jars—had such an appetite that he used to consume a third of the produce in a day. By Brahma to relieve the alarm of the world which had been a constant source of anxious apprehensions of being exterminated that the gods should limit his consumption to a tin and work for only ninety days in a year. He might consume his food in six months all went well without trouble. But when the gods required the cooperation of the earth. When Rama invaded the island of Lanka the nation requiring all their forces employed them to limit his consumption—eventually with success—thus limiting his giant.



With troubled spirit and with broken pride  
Through Lanka's gate the vanquished Pavan fled  
Crushed like an elephant who falls beneath  
The lions spring and feeds the murderous teeth  
Or like a serpent beneath the furious sun  
And vengeful talons of the Feathered King

Such was the giant's fear and wild alarm  
At the swift arrows shot by Rama's arm  
Shafts, with the flame of lightning round them curled,  
Like Brahma's fiery bolts that end the world.  
At length, supported on his golden throne,  
With failing eye he spoke and humbled tone :  
'Alas ! ye Giants, all the toil is vain,  
Fruitless my penance and an age of pain,  
If I, whom India's self confest his peer,  
Secure from Gods, a mortal victor fear.  
My soul remembers—now, alas ! too late  
The words of Brahma which foretold my fate -  
'Tremble, proud Giant,' thus the warning ran,  
'And fear destruction from unheeded man.  
Secure from God and fiend and angel, live,  
From faun and serpent, by the boon I give.  
Against their power and might thy life is charmed,  
Against man only is thy soul unarmed '  
Too well I know the fated hour is nigh :  
Then let each leader to his station fly.  
Guard every alley with a chosen band,  
Let giant warders on the rampart stand,

And let the terror of immortal eyes  
Great Kumbhakarna from his trance arise  
Ho in deep slumber free from care and pain  
Lulled by n ebarm for many a month has lain  
Let him arise our bravest best of all  
And soon the foemen neath his arm will fall  
The giant hosts their monarch a word obeyed  
And left his presence trembling and afraid  
They carried flowery garlands sweet and fresh  
And for his banquet, loads of blood and flesh  
They reacht the cavern where the slumberer lay—  
A mighty cave that stretcht n league each way  
But scarce the strongest could an entrance gain  
So fierce the tempest as he breathed nmain  
They found the giant lying on his bed  
With his hugo limbs at all their length outspread  
Before his face they piled his favorite cheer  
The flesh of buffaloes and boars and deer  
With garlaands heavenly fair they fanned his face  
And clouds of incense sweetened all the place  
Then moon bright conchs they sounded loud and long  
And the cave echoed with the giants song

Then on their breasts they smote with thundering blows,  
And higher yet the wild commotion rose,  
When the loud cymbal vied with drum and horn,  
And fiendish war-cries on the gale upborne  
Through all the air in hideous discord spread,  
And the birds heard the din and fell down dead  
But Kumbhakarna calmly took his rest  
And they smote fiercely on his shaggy chest  
With maces, clubs, and pieces of the rock,  
But still he moved not yet nor felt the shock  
Then all united in one effort more  
With shell, drum, tabor, and redoubled roar ,  
Club, mace, staff, mallet, with strong arms applied,  
Rained vigorous blows upon his breast and side ,  
And screaming elephants were urged to aid,  
And beaten camels groaned and horses neighed  
But Kumbhakarna calmly slumbered still  
Then furious wrath began their breasts to fill  
They drencht his forehead with a hundred pails,  
They toré his ears and hair with teeth and nails ,  
They bound together many a murderous mace,  
And beat him wildly on the head and face,

And drove wild elephants with ponderous tread  
Over his mighty limbs and chest and head  
The unusual weight the giant's slumber broke  
He shook his sides and started and awoke  
And all regardless of the wounds and blows  
Yawning with thirst and faint with hunger rose  
His jaws like hell gaped terrible and wide  
Red as the sun when glaring o'er the side  
Of Meru Every burning breath he drew  
Roared like a mighty wind that rushes through  
The cedars on the mountain Up he raised  
His horselike head with eyes that fiercely blazed  
Like comets horrible as Death in form  
Whom menacing the worlds with fire and storm  
The giants pointed to the reeking store  
Of flesh of buffalo and deer and boar  
And the fiend gorged him with the flesh and blood  
Huge jars of marrow and of wine a flood  
He ended and the giants ventured near  
And bent their heads in reverence and fear  
And Kumbhakarna looked around with eyes  
All glazed and heavy in their first surprise



And drowsy yet from his late troubled rest  
He thus the Rovers of the Night addrest  
‘Why have ye called me from my sleep to wake ?  
None with light cause my rest should dare to break  
Say, is it well with Ravan ? Or has need  
And fear come on ye, that with heedless speed  
Ye thus disturb me ? Mark the words I say,  
The giants’ King shall tremble in dismay,  
The fire be quencht and Indra’s self be slain,  
Ere he shall rouse me from my sleep in vain ’  
The wise Yupaksha humbly thus replied  
‘No fiend has dared us, and no God defied  
But gathered men our golden walls assail,  
And fear is on us lest then might prevail  
For Rama leads them to the deadly strife,  
Burning for vengeance for his ravisht wife  
The hostile flame through Lanka’s town is red,  
And Ravan weeps his best and dearest dead  
Nay, e’en our King who never trembled yet  
For heavenly hosts or fiends in battle met,  
Himself at last the general dread has shared,  
By Rama vanquisht and by Rama spared ’

Then Kumbhakarna thus in answer spake

I will go forth and deadly vengeance take

And tread their armies neth my conquering feet

Then flusht with victory the King will meet

The princes blood shall be my special draught

By you the gore of all the host be quaffed

## THE OMENS.



Fierce as he who rules the dead,  
Ravan forth to battle sped ,  
Chieftains of his giant band  
Followed close on either hand  
Scarce the city gates were past  
When the sun was overcast  
Darkness fell on all around,  
Roared the clouds and shook the ground.  
Startled coursers fled amain  
Mid a shower of bloody rain  
Vultures, with ill-omened wing,  
Smote the banner of the King

While the jackal's hungry cry  
Echoed as the car flew by  
Throbbing eye and aching arm  
Struck him with a wild alarm  
Pallor sat upon his cheek  
And his voice grew low and weak  
Terrible with flash and flame  
Down a hissing meteor came  
Birds that haunt the carnage field  
Round the head of Ravan wheeled  
While his steeds as on they swept  
To the brunt of battle wept.  
Still the maddened King in spite  
Of the omens rushed to fight  
Still by Yama hand impelled  
Toward his fate his course he held  
Earth beneath his chariot shook  
Hill and forest cave and brook

## RAVAN DEAD.



Soon as they saw their leader dead,  
 The giants turned and broke and fled ;  
 Some to the hill, the wood, the cave,  
 Some leapt into the ocean wave  
 Some sad for wife and children's fate  
 Ran to their home through Lanka's gate  
 Poor welcome there in weeping eyes,  
 The groans of age, and children's cries  
 Behind the routed, fierce and strong  
 As lions prest the victor throng  
 From street to street in quest they strayed,  
 And all the marvels there surveyed  
 Eight gates that blazed with gems and gold,  
 Eight walls that girt the giant's hold ;

And domes and spires that flasht on high  
Like sun shot clouds in autumn's sky

Vibhisban with a brother's grief  
Wept o'er the body of the chief  
O hero bold and brave ! he cried  
Skilled in all arms in battle tried !  
Spoiled of thy crown with limbs outspread,  
Why wilt thou press this gory bed ?  
Why sleep upon the earth's cold breast  
When silken couches woo to rest ?  
Ah me my brother ! over bold  
Thine is the fate my heart foretold  
But love and pride forbade to hear  
The friend who blamed thy wild career  
Fallen is our sun that shone so bright  
Our lordly moon is veiled in night  
Our beacon fire is dead and cold  
A hundred waves have o'er it rolled  
What could his light and fire avail  
Against Lord Rama's arrowy hail ?

Woe for the giants' royal tree,  
 Whose stately height was fair to see '  
 His buds were deeds of kingly grace ,  
 His bloom, the sons who deckt his race.  
 His penance was the glorious fruit,  
 And his own noble soul the root.  
 With rifled bloom and mangled bough  
 The royal tree lies prostrate now ' '

' Nay, idly mourn not,' Rama cried,  
 ' The warrior chief has nobly died  
 Intrepid hero, firm through all,  
 So fell he as the brave should fall ,  
 And ill beseems it men like us  
 To weep for those who perish thus  
 Be firm thy causeless grief restrain,  
 And pay the dues that yēt remain '

Again the sad Vibhishan spoke .  
 ' His was the hero's arm that broke  
 Embattled Gods and Indra's might,  
 Unconquered ere to-day in fight

He rushed against thee strove, and fell  
 As Ocean when his waters swell  
 Hurling his might against the rock  
 Falls spent and shattered by the shock  
 Woe for our chief a untimely end  
 The generous lord the trusty friend !  
 The cup of bliss he loved to drain  
 And wealth upon his friends to rain  
 Our sure defence when fear arose  
 A bitter scourge to stubborn foes  
 In Holy Scripture deeply read  
 The sacred flame he duly fed  
 Of ready hand of fearless heart,  
 In sternest penance bore his part.  
 O let the foe thy hand has slain  
 The honours of the dead obtain  
 Then Rama answered Hatred dies  
 When low in dust the foeman lies  
 Now triumph bids our contest cease  
 And knits us in the bonds of peace  
 Let funeral rites be duly paid  
 And he it mine thy toil to aid.



## SITA DISGRACED.



With her sweet eyehds wet with tears of shame,  
 Unveiled before so many, Sita came  
 And met her long-lost husband face to face  
 And Rama gazed upon her winning grace  
 With eyes that longed to weep, but, mute and still,  
 He stayed their fountains with his iron will  
 No word was spoken, for a double tide  
 Surged in his changing bosom, love and pride  
 No word for her who stood before her king  
 In shame and anguish like a guilty thing  
 No word of greeting for his rescued dame  
 On whose bright soul ne'er lay a shade of blame .  
 Whom giant hands from her dear home had torn,  
 And kept a hopeless captive, sorrow-worn ,

For Rama's sake still living through her pain  
And now returning as from Death's domain

Once only once she lifted up her eye  
Once called upon him with a bitter cry  
Then from rude eyes the tears began to flow  
And warriors melted at the lady's woe  
Scarce Lakshman's self the rising flood repress  
And hid his face a moment in his vest  
But Sita cast her causeless shame away  
And her own virtue was her strength and stay  
Conscious of truth that slandering tongues defied  
Her sohs she checked her weeping eyes she dried  
And struggling still with anger and surprise  
Looked on her husband with unflinching eyes  
Then Rama spoke O dame my task is done  
The foe is slain and thou the spoil art won  
Mine arm has conquered and mine honour freed  
Has killed the robber and avenged the deed  
Lord of myself loosed from the vows I swore  
Duty and honour claim from me no more

The wondrous bridge that spanned the angry flood,  
The Giants' city red with foemen's blood  
The countless host by friendly warriors led,  
The wise who counselled and the brave who bled  
With hearts that sank not in the doubtful fray  
This glorious toil has gained its crown to-day  
But hearken, lady 'Twas no love for thee  
That led my army o'er the angry sea  
'Twas not for thee that streams of blood were shed,  
And Lanka's streets piled high with giant dead  
No fond affection for my captive wife  
Impelled my arrow in the day of strife  
I battled only to avenge the cause  
Of injured honour and insulted laws  
Thy name is blemisht, and the shameful doubt  
Fills all my heart and drives affection out  
No more thy beauty charms me 'Tis a light  
Shed by a torch that pains the injured sight  
Go where thou wilt I give thee leave to roam,  
I lead no traitress to my royal home'

Then Sita spoke in accents soft and low,

Yet struggling with unutterable woe  
Hast thou the heart O monarch to dismiss  
A highborn lady with a speech like this?  
To banish thus the daughter of a king  
Like some light damsel trained to dance and sing?  
By all the merit of my life I swear  
I am not what thy hasty words declare  
Doubt others faith but cast all doubt aside  
Of one whose truth a life of love has tried  
Round my weak form his arms the Giant thren  
But all the blame to Fate and him is due  
What could I do—a woman and alone?  
My heart was mine and that was still thine own  
Gainst thee and honour have I wrought no sin  
Pure is my body as my soul within  
Or may the Gods my name and fame destroy  
And har my spirit from eternal joy  
Dear Lakshman haste prepare the burning pile,  
I cannot live to bear a load so vile  
There is no way but only this to gain  
Freedom and rest and clear my life of stain

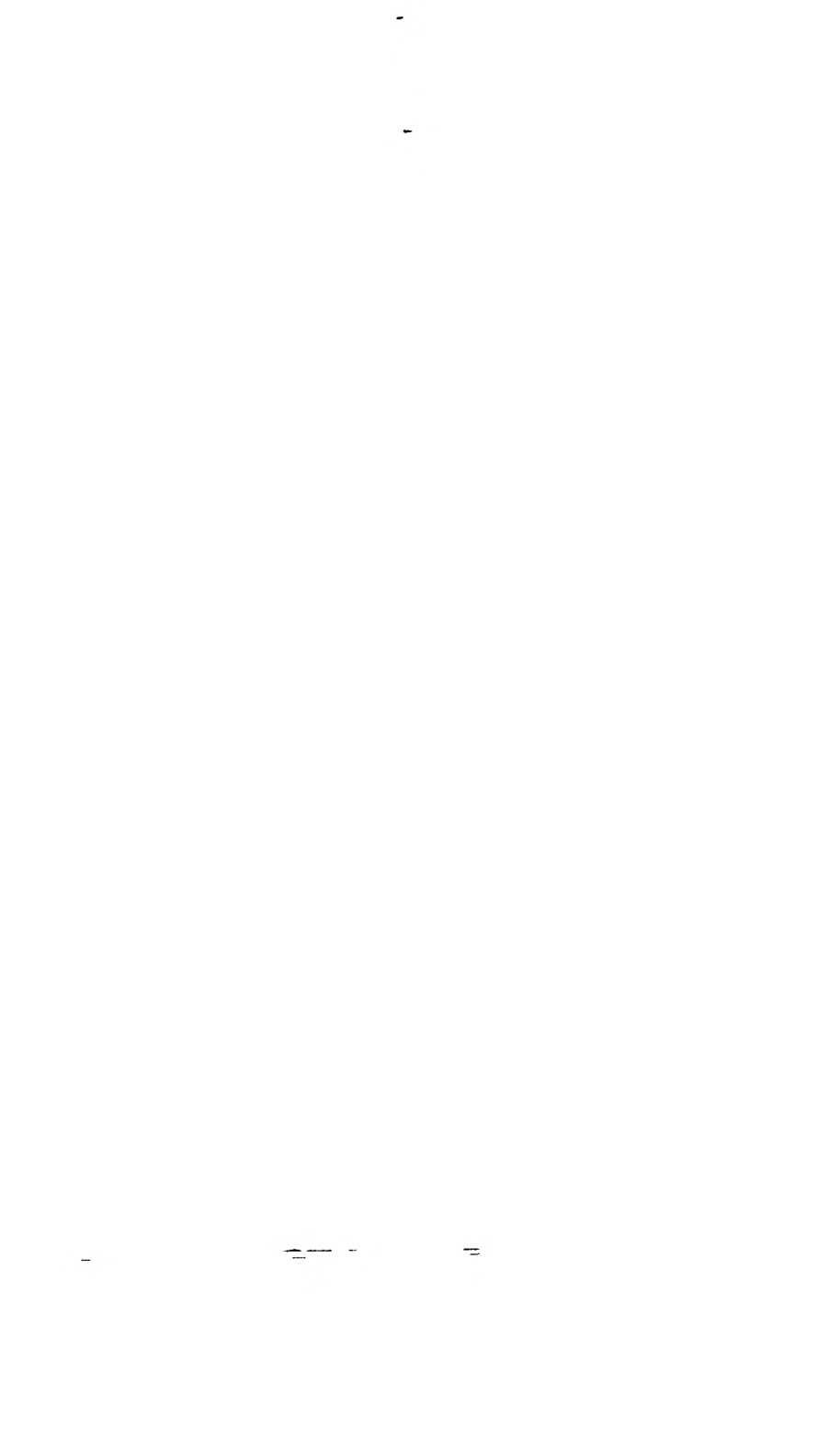
## HOME.



The rest is thus briefly told in the Argument of the poem with which the First Book begins

Then Sita, touched with noble ire,  
Gave her fair body to the fire  
But straight the God of Wind appeared,  
And words from heaven her honour cleared  
And Rama clasped his faithful dame  
Uninjured, pure from spot and blame,  
Obedient to the Lord of Fire<sup>s</sup>  
And the high mandate of his sire  
Led by the Lord who rules the sky,  
The Gods and heavenly Saints drew nigh,  
And honoured him with worthy meed,  
Rejoicing in each glorious deed

His task achieved his foe removed  
He triumphed by the Gods approved  
By grace of Heaven he raised to life  
The chieftains slain in mortal strife  
Then in the magic chariot through  
The clouds to Nandigrama flew  
Met by his faithful brothers there  
He loosed his retired coil of hair  
Thence fair Ayodhya's town he gained  
And o'er his father's kingdom reigned  
Disease or famine ne'er oppressed  
His happy people richly blest  
With all the joys of ample wealth  
Of sweet content and perfect health  
No widow mourned her well loved mate  
No sire his son's untimely fate  
They feared not storm or robber's hand  
No fire or flood laid waste the land  
The Golden Age seemed come again  
To bless the days of Rama's reign



## THE MESSENGER CLOUD

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The subject of the poem is simple and ingenious—a Yaksha a divinity of an inferior order an attendant upon the god of riches Kuber and one of a class which, as it appears from the poem is characterized by a benevolent spirit, a gentle temper and an affectionate disposition has incurred the displeasure of his sovereign and has been condemned by him to a twelve months exile from his home. In the solitary but sacred forest in which he spends the period of his banishment the Yaksha a most urgent care: to find an opportunity of conveying intelligence and consolation to his wife and in the wildness of his grief he fancies that he discovers a friendly messenger in cloud—one of those noble masses which seem almost instinct with life as they traverse a tropical sky in the commencement of the Monsoon and move with slow and solemn progression from the equatorial ocean to the snows of the Himalaya. In the spirit of this bold but not unnatural personification the Yaksha addresses the Cloud and entrusts to it the message he yearns to despatch to the absent object of his attachment. He directs the direction in which the Cloud is to travel—one marked out for it indeed by the eternal laws of nature—and takes the opportunity of alluding to the most important scene of Hindu mythology and tradition—the twilight of prosaic detail but with the true poetic pencil which by a few happy touches brings the subject of the description vividly before the reader's eye. Arrived at the end of the journey the condition of his beloved wife is the theme of the exiles anticpation and is dwelt upon with equal delicacy and truth and the poem terminates with the message that is intended to assuage her grief and animate her hopes. The whole of this part of the composition is distinguished by the graceful expression of natural and amiable feelings and cannot fail to leave a favourable impression of the national character. H. H. WILSON



## I

Dark are the shadows of the trees that wave  
Their pendent branches upon Rama's Hill,<sup>1</sup>  
Veiling the stream where Sita loved to lave  
Sweet limbs that hallowed as they touched the rill .  
There a sad Spirit, whom his master's will,  
Wroth for a service he had rendered ill,  
An exile from his happy home had torn,  
Was sternly doomed for twelve long months to mourn,  
Of all his glories reft, of his dear love forlorn

## II

Some weary days, intolerably slow,  
The listless exile all alone had past  
The bracelet clung not to the arm that woe  
Had withered, and the weeping and the fast ,  
When on a day of June he upward cast  
His aching eyes, lo ! on the mountain lay  
A glorious cloud embracing it, as vast  
As some huge elephant that stoops in play  
To trample down the bank that bars his onward way.

<sup>1</sup> Situated, it appears, a little to the north of Nagpore

## III

Once and again his wistful eyes he raised  
Checking the tear-drop in her secret springs  
And on the jasmīn's sweet restorer gazed  
The mournful servant of the King of Kings<sup>1</sup>  
Mournful for if the first seen rain-cloud brings  
Trouble and doubt to him whose arms are prest  
Around his love O judge what torture wrings  
His bosom far from her he loves the best,  
A prey to longing love and fear and wild unrest

## IV

Then cheered by hope he culled each budding spray  
And the last blooms that lingered in the brake,  
And hastened humbly to the Cloud to pray  
With offerings trusting for his darling's sake  
While Welcome friendship's sweetest word he spake  
That he would waft his message as a spell  
Whence life and comfort the lone bride might take  
That he would calm her troubled heart and tell  
That were she only present all with him were well

<sup>1</sup> A title of Kavera the God of Wealth

## V.

Blame not the Spirit, if his wild despair  
Urged his love-laden bosom to complain  
To the dark child of vapour, sun, and air  
Have ye ne'er learnt that hopeless love is fain  
To shriek the lamentation wrung by pain  
In nature's senseless ear - to weep and moan  
To valley and to mountain, and to rain  
Tears on the flowers and call on stock and stone  
To suffer with his woe and echo groan for groan ?

## VI

'O thou of ever-changing form,' he cried,  
'I know thee, offspring of a glorious race,  
The mighty counsellor close by the side  
Of royal Indra is thine honoured place  
By cruel fate torn from my love's embrace  
I fly to thee for comfort in my woe  
Better to sue and be denied the grace  
By one of gentle blood whose worth we knew,  
Than stoop to bear away rich guerdon from the low

## VII

Dear friend of all whom flames of anguish burn  
 If thou hast power and pity as of old  
 On me on me thy tender glances turn  
 Who mourn the anger of the God of Gold  
 Lo distant Alaka fly uncontrolled  
 Where dwell my brethren in their stately halls  
 Here let my message to my love be told  
 Mid gilded palaces and marble walls  
 On which the silver light of Siva's crescent<sup>1</sup> falls

## VIII

There wilt thou see the melancholy bride  
 Of me thy brother thin and ghastly pale  
 Her only care—for every joy has died—  
 To count the dark days slowly lengthening tale  
 She lingers yet for woman's heart, though frail  
 As the fair flower that nipt by winter's chill  
 Bends her sweet head before the rude rough gale  
 If hope be left her in her misery still  
 Clings fondly to the life despair alone can kill

<sup>1</sup> The crest of Siva: the snow-mountain Himalaya mountain mid which Alaka is situated his favourite haunt

## IX

Hence as thou mountest up, each lonely wife,  
Tossing her tresses from her brow in glee  
And drinking from the sight rapture and life,  
Thy rapid course through realms of air shall see,  
And whisper blessings as she looks on thee  
For who at such a warning would not brave -  
Danger and death, and to his darling flee,  
Save the sad captive in his fetters, save  
A prisoned wretch like me, a tyrant's helpless slave !

## X

As favouring gales thy airy course impel,  
The tuneful Rain-birds shall thy way attend ,  
A pomp of wreathing cranes thy state shall swell,  
On silver pinions rustling round their friend ,  
From many a stream shall lordly swans ascend,  
When the glad thunder of thy voice they hear,  
And wild with joy their eager course shall bend  
To Manas' mountain lake, still following near  
Till high Kailasa's peaks, thy journey's end, appear

## XL

Now with one brief adieu one last embrace  
Turn from this steep thine ancient friend away  
Where Rama's blessed feet once left their trace  
Though his hot tears will mourn thy shortened stay  
Yet ere the message of my love I say  
Hear the long journey mark each place of rest  
Where thou wilt fain with weary wings delay  
To gather strength upon some mountain crest  
Or drink exhausted from some gentle river's breast

## XII

Quick from this mountain moist with verdure rise  
And turn thee northward in thy lofty flight  
The nymphs of air with eager upturned eyes  
Shall look on thee in wonder and delight  
And deem some hull rent from the mountain height  
Rides on the furious blast Then sad with shame  
The warder elephants whose peerless might  
Upholds the world shall mourn their vanish'd fame  
And far surpass by thee renounce their ancient clum

## XIII.

Then steering east, yon glorious gems that blend  
Then light and shade in Indra's heavenly bow'<sup>1</sup>  
To thy dark ground a softened light shall lend,  
And make thee glorious with a borrowed glow,  
As the gay splendours of the peacock throw  
New beauty, round the youthful Krishna spread  
Then to the plains of fruitful Mala go  
Whose bright-eyed maids, with fond looks upward sped,  
Shall bless their bounteous friend slow sailing overhead

## XIV

Thence northward speeding, with a lighter course,  
Turn to the west, and, floating downward, seek,  
A pleasant shelter to recruit thy force,  
The shady summits of the Mango Peak  
He will relieve thee travel-worn and weak,  
Thy timely aid that oft has quenched the flame  
That burnt his trees will in thy favour speak  
Friendship's sweet debt not e'en the base disclaim,

<sup>1</sup> The rainbow

And far from noble souls be such disgrace and shame.<sup>1</sup>

## XI

When thy dark glory rests above the gold  
Of fruit and green of boughs that wave around  
The maids of Heaven with rapture shall behold  
New beauty stealing o'er the summit, crowned  
As with the tresses of a woman bound  
Upon her fur head as a diadem.  
And the bright mountain swelling from the ground  
Like the full breast of Earth shall ravish them  
When thou dark Cloud art there that bosom's bud and gem

## XVI

If worn and weary with the lengthening way

<sup>1</sup> The Hnls have been the object of much ill-considered and equally ill-considered criticism. Some writers have invested them with every possible attribute, but and they have been leprosed by others of the contrary. It is a pity amongst the excellences I must think me grateful to have been so particularly noticed and there are many of the European critics who scarcely imagine that the native of the country ever heard of a line of merit. To them and to all I therefore on this subject the above is a satisfactory reply and that I doubt if I shall ever remain in I shall be a translation of the original passage. I shall not be so far from the truth as to say that the same will turn away its face if it is a direct translation of the kind of which we then should the expected act this! H. H. Wilcox



The famous hill of Chitrakuta<sup>1</sup> woos  
Thy friendly presence for awhile to stay ,  
There, as the grateful rest thy strength renews,  
Do not, for pity, gentle Cloud, refuse  
To soothe his burning heat with thy soft rain  
Sweet mercy, watered with the kindly dews  
Of virtue, is a seed ne'er sown in vain  
Soon will the generous act its worthy fruit obtain

## XVII

Linger an hour, then, launching lightly forth,  
Leave the dark glades which Wood-nymphs wander o'er  
Pursue thine any journey to the north  
With pinions swifter for thy nimble store  
Soon over Vindhya's mountains wilt thou soar,  
And Reva's rippling stream whose waters glide  
Beneath their feet, without their rush and roar,  
In many a rock-barred channel, summer-dried,  
Like lines of paint that deck an elephant's huge side

<sup>1</sup> "The mountain here mentioned must be in the vicinity of Omerkuntak, and part of the same range the name signifies, "the variegated or wonderful peak," and is applied to a number of hills the most famous hill of this name is situated in Bundelkund H H WILSON

## XVIII

Here where the air is heavy with the scent  
Of elephants that roam along the rill  
From the fair stream restore thy treasures spent  
In travel and thy wasted bosom fill  
Lest the rude wind drive thee about at will  
To cheer thy way each bud shall lovelier grow  
And fragrant jasmine be more fragrant still  
The burning woods waft odours from below  
And clear toned birds delight thy onward path to show

## XIX

Each Sylph shall watch thee with observant eyes  
And mark the Rain birds eager for the run  
Flocking to meet thee from the distant skies  
Then he will count in ever lengthening chain  
Mounting from fen and field crane after crane  
And when thy voice of thunder loud and clear  
Proclaims thee nigh to his fond breast will strain  
His darling mingling with each kiss a tear  
Drawn from his happy eyes by love's unreasoning fear

## XX

Ah me ! in vain, mid lovely scenes like those,  
I bid my friendly messenger be fleet,  
Will not each mountain woo thee to repose  
Where wild woods murmur and the flowers are sweet ?  
Will not the peacock, as he turns to greet  
Thy coming with love-beaming eye, prevail ?  
Will not his tender looks my hopes defeat ?  
With too successful blandishment assail  
Thy yielding heart, and cause thy promised truth to fail ?

## XXI

On, on, my herald ! as thou sailest nigh,  
A green of richer glory will invest  
Dasarna's groves where the pale leaf is dry  
There shall the swans awhile their pinions rest  
Then the Rose-apple, in full beauty diest,  
Shall show her fruit, then shall the crane prepare,  
Warned of the coming rain, to build her nest,  
And many a tender spray shall rudely tear  
From the old village tree, the peasants' sacred care.

## XXII

But rest not yet thy steady course pursue  
 And a town foremost on the rolls of fame  
 Vidisa<sup>1</sup> seat of kings will charm thy view  
 And bless thee far above thy fondest aim  
 Where Vetravati like an amorous dame  
 With arched brows her rippling waves will show  
 And with each winning art thy love will claim  
 Enslaving thee with the melodious flow  
 Of streams that kiss the bank murmuring soft and low

## XXIII

Hence to a lower hill direct thy flight  
 And for a moment on its crest descend  
 Thy touch its faint Kadambas shall delight  
 And through each spray new life and rapture send  
 That bud and blossom shall with joy distend  
 These are the groves where youthful lovers meet  
 Their gold-bought beauties whose rich perfumes blend  
 With the wild flowers till every dark retreat  
 Is loaded with the scent that fills the rocky seat

<sup>1</sup> Vidisa appears to be the modern Bilalgaon in the province of Malwa

## XXIV

Rise with new vigour in thy wings, and look  
 Upon the fainting jasmine-buds that pine  
 Along the pruned bank of the mountain brook  
 To their mute prayer in pitying love incline,  
 And water them with those sweet drops of thine,  
 Shading awhile the heat-drop-beaded face  
 Of the young flower-gul as she hastes to twine  
 Her fragrant wreath, too languid to replace  
 The drooping lotus-bud she culled her ear to grace

## XXV

Here bend a little from thy straight career,  
 And though thou speedest on to northern skies,  
 Turn and behold a wondrous sight, for near  
 Thy path Oujein's<sup>1</sup> imperial domes arise  
 Shouldst thou not see her women's glorious eyes,  
 That flash to love or kindle to disdain  
 In fire that with the lightning's splendour vies

<sup>1</sup> "Ujjayini, or the modern Oujein, is supposed to have been the residence of our poet, and the capital of his celebrated patron, Vikramaditya. It has been a place of great note, from the earliest periods of Hindu tradition down to the present day." H. H. WILSON

Those looks that bind the heart as with a chain—  
Thy birth has been for naught thy life is all in vain

## XXVI

Now from the level of thine airy road  
Glide gently down and amorously sink  
Upon Nirvindhya's breast who long has glowed  
With love of thee there cling and kiss and drink  
She with the wild swans clamorous on her brink  
And their white wings around her for a zone  
From thy soft pressure will not coyly shrink  
Her trembling wavelets will her rapture own  
And testify her love by every gesture shown

## XXVII

Sail on refresh'd dear envoy nor forget  
To look with pity upon Sindu pale  
With sere leaves shaken o'er the rivulet  
From her own trees by the hot summer gale  
For her sad shrunken waters welnigh fail  
Thin as the length of hair which women braid  
When their dear husbands' absence they bewail

O, pity her, thou gentle Cloud, and aid  
The longing of her love by each fond look betrayed.

## XXVIII

Near thee a bright imperial city stands,  
The blest Avanti or Visala,<sup>1</sup> pride '  
Of all the earth, famed for its minstrel band  
Who with the magic of their verse have vied  
To spread the tender story far and wide  
Of King Udayana <sup>2</sup> a glorious town,  
Brought, by the happy Saints unsatisfied  
With all that Paradise can offer, down,

<sup>1</sup> Synonyms of Oujein

<sup>2</sup> "Pradyota was a sovereign of Oujein, who had a daughter named Vasavadatta whom he intended to bestow in marriage upon a King of the name of Sanjaya. In the meantime the princess sees the figure of Vatsaraja (or Udayana) in a dream, and becomes enamoured of him. She contrives to inform him of her love, and he carries her off from her father and his rival." WILSON

To be their best reward their virtues' worthiest crown

## XXIX.

The sweet soft zephyr laden with the scent

Which every lotus opening to the air

Of morning from its rifled stores has lent

Plays wooingly around the loosened hair

And fevered cheek of every lady there,

Then as it blows o'er Sipra,<sup>1</sup> fresh and strong

Bids all the swans upon her banks prepare

To hail the sunrise with their sweetest song

And loves with its own voice the music to prolong

<sup>1</sup> Besides ultimate felicity the Hindus have several minor degrees of happiness among which is the enjoyment of Indra's Swarga, or in fact of a Hamamud-n-paradise. The degree of duration of the pleasures of this paradise are proportioned to the merits of those admitted to it and "they who have enjoyed this happy region of Swarga but whose virtue is exhausted re-visit the habitation of mortals. The case now alluded to seems however to be something different from that described by Sir William Jones. It appears by the explanation of the Commentators that the exhausted pleasures of Swarga had proved inefficient for the recompense of certain acts of a nature which however were not sufficient to merit final emancipation. The dissipated persons had then recourse to seek elsewhere for the balance of their reward and for this purpose they returned to Earth bringing with them the faint portion of Swarga, which they continued to live in the discharge of a limited life while account was settled and the liberated spirits were contented with the great universal primordial essence. The portion of Sarg that was allotted to Earth was the city Anant, whose superior sanctity and divine principles are here alluded to, and thus explained by the poet. H. Wilson

<sup>2</sup> The river on which Ojain stands



## XXX.

Rest on these flower sweet terraces, and feel,  
From open casements where the women braid  
Their long, soft locks, delicious odour steal  
Look on the polisht marble where the maid  
Her small foot, blushing with the dye, has laid ,  
There will the peacock with a joyous dance  
Spring forth to greet thee from the Mango's shade,  
And hail his dear friend with a loving glance  
O, rest in this sweet spot, nor lose this blessed chance

## XXXI

Hence to the temple of the mighty Lord  
Whom Chandi<sup>1</sup> loves and all the worlds revere ,  
There for a moment shalt thou be adored  
By those who serve him, when thy hues appear  
Like Siva's neck,<sup>2</sup> as though their God were near.  
Then through the garden pleasant gales shall stray  
From Gandhavati's fountain, crystal-clear,

<sup>1</sup> A name of the consort of Siva

<sup>2</sup> "But Siva those destroying streams  
Drank up at Brahma's beck  
Still in thy throat the dark flood gleams,  
God of the Azure Neck"

Bearing the scent of lotus blooms away  
Shaken by lovely girls who in the water play

## XXXII

Stay till the hour of evening worship comes ,  
Stay while the Day God lingers in the sky  
Then with low thunders for the call of drums  
Win precious guerdon from the Lord Most High  
Each dancing girl with rapture beaming eye  
Shall thank thee as thy soft drops cool the ground  
While her faint hands the jewelled chowries' ply  
And as she moves her languid feet around  
Her slender waist the chimes of tinkling silver sound.

## XXXIII

When the thick shadows of dark midnight fall  
Blinding the maidens in the royal street,  
Who fain would fly where love and rapture call  
O let thy flashes guide their erring feet  
And lead them safely till their loves they meet

<sup>1</sup> A brush made of peacock's feathers, or the tail of the yak. It is used as a fan or to whisk off flies and other insects and this piece of attention is paid by Hindus to the figures of their Gods.

But check thy rain and still thy thunder, lest  
 Their terrors force the maidens to retreat  
 Then with thy lightning bride, play-wearied, rest  
 Where sleeps, high up the tower, the white dove in her nest

## XXXIV

Thence, with the rising sun, thy course pursue,  
 For loving envoys ever shun delay ,  
 But hide him not, when mounting, from the view,  
 For the false lover comes with coming day  
 To the poor weeping girl, to kiss away  
 The water from her eyes    So comes the sun  
 To cheer the lilies with his amorous ray,  
 And kiss their drooping heads, till, one by one,  
 They dry the dewy drops that down their petals run

## XXXV

Then will thy shadow for a moment sleep  
 On the white bosom of Gambhira's stream,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "This river, and the Gandhavati in the vicinity of the temple of Siva, which lately occurred, are probably amongst the numerous and (now) nameless brooks with which the province of Malwa abounds" H. H. WILSON

And thy dear image in her crystal deep  
 Blend with the fancies of her maiden dream  
 Then will she wake to win thee with the gleam  
 Of finny darters for the lore of eyes.  
 Steel not thy heart against her love nor deem  
 Her lilies smile but to allure the prize  
 O yield thee to her prayer O yield thee and be wise

## XXXXI

Ah yes! I see thee in her loving arms—  
 Those feathery branches of the tall bamboo—  
 And spread beneath thee are her yielded charms  
 And her smooth sides uncovered to the view  
 How could such loveliness unheeded woo?  
 Who could resist her softly pleading smile  
 With heart all cold and dead if e'er he knew  
 What joy it is to kiss each breast like isle?  
 Who who would turn away nor linger there awhile?

## XXXXII

Charged with the odours of the wakened earth  
 Whom thy fresh rain has left so pure and gay

The wind of early morning, wild with mirth,  
Amid the branches of the grove shall stray  
And woo each tendril to responsive play  
Then waft thee on to Devagiri's height,  
Charming the ear with music on the way,  
Where languid elephants shall stay his flight  
And drink his balmy breath with wonder and delight

## XXXVIII

There gleams the temple, loved and honoured most  
By Skanda, Lord of War, who, at the head  
Of the bright legions of the heavenly host,  
Embattled Gods to arms and conquest led  
A wondrous Child, in flames of glory bred  
O, crown the slayer of his demon foes !  
Turn to a cloud of living flowers, and shed  
O'er his young brows the lily and the rose  
Bathed in the lucid stream through heavenly realms that flows

## XXXIX

Send forth thy thunder, till the glorious voice,  
By rocky dell and cavern multiplied,  
Bidding the peacock in the shade rejoice,

Calls him to dance along the mountain's side  
Majestic bird whom Skanda loves to ride  
Whom Skanda's mother holds so wondrous dear  
That when his moulted plumes in all their pride  
Of starry radiance fall and glitter near  
She lifts them from the ground to grace her royal ear!

4.

Thy homago rendered to the Warrior God  
Whose infant steps amid the thickets strayed  
Where the reeds wave over the holy sod  
Speed on but let thy course awhile be stand  
Till meet obeisance to that stream be made  
That sprang in olden time from sacred goro  
Of hecatombs by Rantideva paid \*

<sup>1</sup> Skand. r i t k y a the W r God born to destroy the 1 mo i Tar-la  
is represented mounted on a peacock.

\* Sing from the blood of countless slain. The sacrifice of the horse or of the cow appears to have been common to the people of the Himalayas. It has been recorded that the sacrifice is a tribal type and that the form sacrifices go only a part of the population after which it was utterly. In the text of the passage above is unfavourable to understand as the meaning of the blood of the kine into a river certainly implies that blood was left. The presence of the original literally red and red is present in the blood of the bull of S. bh. that is kine. Similarly the celebration of cow is left to the ringing of the ocean and himself granting to her other that they desired. Daughter of Sarala is an expression of common occurrence to the cow. H. H. Wilson

And through the lands her author's glory bore  
Enshrined within her waves, to spread for evermore

## XII

In fear, each minstrel of the heavenly quire  
Shall see thee stoop those watery stores to diam,  
And fly thee trembling lest his darling lyre  
Be robbed of music by thy threatened rain  
Then from his airy watch-tower will he strain  
His eager eyes the wondrous sight to view,  
As thy large lucid drops, in many a chain,  
Hang then long pendants o'er thy borrowed blue,  
A string of pearls that show the sapphire gleaming through

## XLII

That river past, to Dasapuna fly,  
And with the shadow of thy coming rouse  
The beauties of the city till each eye  
Glances its welcome till each maid and spouse,  
Beneath the delicate bending of her brows,  
Shows her dark pupil flashing wild with glee  
In her pure pearly eye-ball, and allows

Short glimpses of a sight as fair to see  
As a white jasmoe-bud where sits the black wild bee

## XVIII

Then speeding on to Brahmavartta's land  
Hover above the Kurus fatal field<sup>1</sup>  
Rich with the blood of many a slaughtered band  
Where the proud banner waved the war-cry pealed  
Where the sword smote upon the helm and shield  
When godlike Arjuna<sup>2</sup> with arrowy hail  
Laid low the heads of kings who scorned to yield  
As when the arrows of thy sleet assail  
The golden lilies heads and strew them down the vale

<sup>1</sup> Kuru Kshetra the Field of the Kurus is the scene of the celebrated battle between them and the Pandus which forms the subject of the *Mahabharata*. It lies a little to the south-east of *Thana* near which is still a place of note and pilgrimage. It is not far from *Panipat* the seat of an the celebrated engagement, that between the assembled Princes of Hindustan and the combined strength of the *Mahattas*. The part of the country is little presenting few obstacles to the movement of large armies has in every period of the history of Hindustan been the theatre of contests. H. H. Wilson.

<sup>2</sup> Arjun was the friend and pupil of Krishna and the third of the *Pandava* Princes. He has been long and prominently introduced by European readers particularly in Sir Charles Wilkins's beautiful translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* and appears in the opening of that poem in a very amiable light. H. H. Wilson.



## XLIV

Now to Saraswati,<sup>1</sup> whose waters roll  
Beside thy path, with due respect draw near,  
And let her cleansing wave refresh thy soul  
When Balarama,<sup>2</sup> filled with noble fear  
Of kindred slaughter, could no longer cheer  
His sorrowing spirit with the sparkling wine,  
Though, murreted in the cup, the eyes most dear  
Of his own Revati were wont to shine,  
He sought this limpid flood and made the spot divine

## XLV

On to the place where infant Ganga leaps  
From the dark woods that belt the Mountains' King,  
Hurling her torrent down the rugged steeps

<sup>1</sup> "The Saraswati, or as it is corruptly called, the Sursooty, falls from the southern portion of the Himadrya mountains, and runs into the great desert, where it is lost in its sands. It flows a little to the north west of Kurnishena, and though rather out of the line of the cloud's progress not sufficiently so to prevent the introduction into the poem of a stream so celebrated and so holy." H. H. WILSON

<sup>2</sup> "We have here the reason why the waters of the Saraswati are objects of religious veneration. Balarama, the elder brother of Krishna, refused to take any part in the warfare between the Kurus and the Pandus, and retired into voluntary seclusion filled with grief at the nature of the contest." H. H. WILSON

Those holy waters in the siṅgaṅga  
To Sāgar's children bliss and heaven could bring  
Fresh from her native sky a sportive maid  
On Siva's awful head she dared to cling  
And with the laughter of her form repaid  
His consort's jealous frown as with his hair she played \*

## XLVI

Drink, for the flood is living crystal, drink,  
For the warm gale thy weary wings has dried.  
Come, gently bend thee o'er her rocky brink  
And tint her waves with azure as they glide  
So when dark Jumna's tributary tide  
With kissing waves to blend with Ganga flows,  
The mightier waters beautifully dyed  
With borrowed azure to the sun disclose,  
Mixt with their pearly light, the sapphire's darker glows

## XLVII

See ' the proud parent of this heavenly child  
Woos thee to rest upon his breezy height,  
Where herds of musk-deer, as they wander wild,  
Enrich with odour every crag Alight,  
And, coucht upon the summit robed in white,  
Enhance his snowy beauty, as one speck  
Of sable shows more gloriously bright  
The skin of Siva's Bull,<sup>1</sup> and serves to deck  
The whiteness of his flank, the splendour of his neck

<sup>1</sup> The animal on which Siva loves to ride, always represented of a milk-white colour

## XLVIII

Hark ! the gales whistling through the woods of pine  
Urging to madness all the straining boughs  
That twist and chafe and bend and intertwine  
The latent flame to wildest fury rouse  
Singing the long hair of the mountain cows  
Quick rain a thousand torrents on the crest  
Of the kind hill and cool his burning brows  
With wealth of water thou art richly blest  
And fortune's sweetest fruit is aiding friends distress

## XLIX

Should Gryphon hosts by mad presumption led  
Vext by thy thunder mount the realm of air  
To ride thee down beneath their impious tread  
Laugh with thy rain to see them baffled there  
And with the dashing of thy hail stones scare  
Thy scattered foes So let them learn how vain  
Is the wild enterprise they fain would dare  
That the fond strivings of ambition gain  
No guerdon but disgrace no recompense but pain

## I

But stoop a little from thy pride of place  
With circling motion reverently slow  
Around the rock where pilgrims still may trace  
The foot of Mahadeva,<sup>1</sup> softly go  
There saintly breaths with rapt devotion glow,  
There holy hands the flames of worship feed,  
There His good servants, saved from sin and woe,  
From the sore weight of earthly life are freed,  
Join His own heavenly band and gain a priceless meed

## II

Hast thou no voice to laud Him? Be not dumb,  
But let thy thunder round the caverned hill  
Proclaim His glory like a mightier drum  
The gales with melody each reed shall fill  
The maidens of the sky, whose bosoms thrill  
With holy rapture, shall rejoice and sing,  
And all shall swell the glorious concert till  
Valley and mountain, earth and air shall ring  
Hailing with jubilant hymns the great victorious King

<sup>1</sup> The 'Great God,' SIVA

## LII

Skirting the mansion of eternal snows

Compress thy form and winding round explore

Where Krauncha's parted rocks a pass disclose

Traversed by swans—those rocks that burst before

The might of Rama<sup>1</sup> and the axe he bore

Then show like Vishnu's darksome foot whose tread

Measured the sky and earth's broad bosom o'er

When Bali with his proud heart filled with dread

Confessed the Saviour God and bowed his impious head<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Krauncha pass is said to have been made by Parasurama or Rama with the ax and incarnation of Vishnu.

<sup>2</sup> The story of Bali and the Vaman or dwarf Avatar was first told by Sannarat, and has since been frequently repeated. As the former is good specimen of the style in which Hindu legends were narrated by European travellers in the last century it may be here inserted. The fifth incarnation was in a Bramin dwindle and the name of Vaman it was wrought to restrain the pride of the giant Bely. The latter after having conquered the god expelled them from Sogon. He was generous true to his word compassionate and charitable. Vichenou under the form of a very little Bramin presented himself before him while he was sacrificing and asked him for three paces of land to build a hut. Bely ridiculed the apparent imbecility of the dwarf in telling him that he ought not to limit his demand to a beguiling trifle—that his generosity would be to award a challenge donation of land. Vaman answered that being of small stature what he asked was more than sufficient. The prince immediately granted his request and to ratify his donation poured water into his right hand which was no sooner done than the dwarf grew so prodigiously that his body filled the universe! He measured the earth with three paces and the heaven with anither and then summoned Bely to give him his word for the third. The prince then recognised Vichenou and handed him and presented his head to him but the god, satisfied with his homage sent him to govern the Pandion and permitted him to return every year to the earth the day of the full moon in the month of November. H. H. WIL.

## III

Now soaring upward, on Kailas's crest,  
That lends its mirror to each heavenly maid,  
Linger a little as an honoured guest,  
And let thine airy pilgrimage be staid  
Once that high mountain shook and was afraid,  
Loosened by Ravan, Lord of Lanka's isle,  
Now cleaving heaven, to all the lands displayed,  
The white peaks of the hly-radiant pile  
Flash on the world below, like Siva's glorious smile.

## I.IV

I see the summits of the hill, that shine  
Like new-cut ivory so purely white,  
Gleam with fresh lustre as that form of thine  
Descends upon them, and thy tint of night  
Tips with a sable pall the snowy height  
So Balarama's limbs of silvery hue  
Show fairer in their purple livery dight,  
So from his chest and arms exposed to view  
The heightened sheen beneath sets off the raiment too<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He is represented of a white colour clothed in a dark blue vest

## LV

High fate is thine should sportive Gauri<sup>1</sup> list  
In those sweet moments ere the close of day—  
Untied the serpent bracelet from the wrist—  
Hand lockt in hand with Siva there to stray  
Come and with easy steps their upward way  
Thy stores of rain within thy breast confine,  
And let the heavenly pair delighted lay  
The blessing of their feet on stairs that shine  
With gold caught from the sun ruby and almandine

## LVI

Then will celestial maids with laugh and shout  
Open their lovely arms thy form to seize  
And o'er their tresses force thy waters out  
Which the light touch of hundred diamond<sup>2</sup> frees  
But should too long restraint thy soul displease  
Send forth the thunder of thy voice and they

<sup>1</sup> One of the names of Siva's consort.

<sup>2</sup> The diamond and thunderbolt according to Hindu ideas, are of one substance and are called by the same name. As the fall of the thunderbolt is usually followed by rain and may thus be considered as its cause the propinquity and the mutual friction of the same substance upon the wrists of our young ladies is, in like manner supposed to occasion the dispersion of the fluid treasures of the Cloud. H. H. Wilson



Fleeter through terror than the western breeze,  
Will fly thee, e'en in their delicious play,  
And seek their distant home in wonder and dismay.

## LVII.

Near is the goal, yet, ere thy course be run,  
One sweet fresh draught of limpid water take  
Where golden lilies opening to the sun  
Stud the broad bosom of the Manas lake  
Deign for awhile a friendly shade to make  
For Indra's elephant, and, floating through,  
With the soft fanning of thy pinions shake  
The Heavenly Tree, and all her blooms renew  
With the young morning's breath embalmed with silver dew.

## LVIII

There, by the mountain claspt in loving arms,  
Alaka, City of the Blessed, lies  
Her bright feet bathed by Ganga's flood, she charms  
With marvellous beauty e'en immortal eyes

<sup>1</sup> A celebrated lake in the centre of the Himalayas "We here take leave of the geographical part of the poem, which is highly creditable to Kalidasa's accuracy, and now come to the region of unmixed fable, the residence of Kuvra and his demigods" H H WILSON.

Thou too free rover shalt her beauty prize  
And often wander to mine own dear town  
Nor shall sweet Alaka thy love despise  
But proudly wear upon her domes a crown  
Of the pure drops of pearl thou pourest softly down

## LIX

And she has charms which naught but time exceeds  
High as thyself her airy turrets soar  
And from her gilded palaces there swells  
The voice of drums loud as thy thunder & roar  
Thy pearls are mockt by many a jewelled floor  
Come with the glories of thy bow compare  
The varied tints on arch and corridor  
And for thy lightning in the midnight air  
Look in her maddens eye and own a rivid there

## LX

Unmatcht is she for lovely girls who learn  
To choose the flowers that suit them best and bring  
The varied treasures of each month in turn  
To aid those charms which need no heightening

The Amaranth, bight glory of the spring ,  
The Lotus, gathered from the summer flood ,  
Acacias, taught around their brows to cling ,  
The Jasmine's fragrant white, their locks to stud ;  
And, bursting at thy rain, the young Kadamba-bud

## LXI

O beauties, worthy of that beauteous place,  
That sweetest city which I know so well,  
Where mine own brethren of ethereal race,  
Blest with the love of those fair angels, dwell  
In homes too beautiful for tongue to tell !  
Those homes by night a starry radiance fills,  
Shot from the jewelled floors where breathes the smell  
Of roses, and while melting music thrills,  
They quaff the precious wine the Heavenly Tree distils

## LXII

The tell-tale sunbeam of the morning, thrown  
Upon the path each roving beauty chose,  
Falls on some faded flower, some loosened zone,  
A withered lotus or a dying rose,

Or bracelet which her haste forgot to close  
Here a dropt diadem of orient pearl  
The fond impatience of its mistress shows  
And here the jasmine bud that deckt the curl  
Lying upon the grass betrays the amorous girl

## LXIII

There the coy nymph too eagerly embraced  
By some young lover whom the night makes bold  
Slips from the arm that stealing round her waist  
Has forced her shrinking from its amorous hold  
Her ruffled robe over her breast to fold  
Then armed with fragrant powder she will turn  
Where on high pedestals of gems and gold  
Bright torches with too clear a radiance burn  
To hide the triumph of the love she will not spurn

## LXIV

There driven by the ever moving gale  
The clouds thy brethren in an endless train  
Around each palace of the city sail  
Now easy access to the halls they gain

And mar the painter's art with dewy stain.  
But when the traces of their steps they see  
They fear within those chambers to remain,  
In wreathing clouds of incense seek to flee,  
Glide through the lattice bars and once more wander free

## LXV

Dark is the sky behind thee, but, whene'er  
The light wind moves thy sombre veil away,  
Again the moon, most excellently fair,  
With naught the glory of the light to stay,  
Shines on each chamber with a loving ray,  
Where beauty, waking from her rapturous dream,  
Sees with delight the silver radiance play  
On hanging crystals<sup>1</sup> where thy dewdrops gleam,  
And feels through all her flame returning vigour stream

## LXVI

Though Kama, tyrant of the soul, in awe  
Of Siva, foe to Love, Kuvera's friend,

<sup>1</sup> "The moon gem, which is supposed to absorb the rays of the moon, and to emit them again in the form of pure and cool moisture" H H WILSON

Forbears in Alaka his bow to draw<sup>1</sup>  
 Still mightier arms her merry maidens lend  
 What bow so lovely as the brows they bend?  
 What archer's skill so perfect as the art  
 Of those bewitching eyes that love to send  
 The arrows of their glances forth and dart  
 Those shafts that never fail but pierce the lover's heart?

## LXVII

Now close beneath thee thou wilt see my home  
 Where flashing forth the jewelled archway's glow  
 North of my lord Kavera's royal dome  
 With hues of glory mocks the heavenly bow  
 There my love's flowers in dazzling beauty blow  
 There in the midst the tall Mandara<sup>2</sup> so  
 Bending the burden of her branches low  
 To touch her lady's hand no child might be

<sup>1</sup> This all due to the fate which befell the Hindu Cupid upon his assaulting Siv when at the desire of the gods he inflamed with the love of Priti Siva and his wrath reduced the little deity to ashes by a flame from the eye in his forehead and although he was subsequently created again he is here supposed to remain in dread of his former enemy H. H. WILSON

<sup>2</sup> The Coastal tree Erythrina Indica

Nurtured with tenderer care than that her darling tree.'

## LXVIII

There girt with emerald steps a bright lake gleams,  
Where the gold lotus fires the lily's white .  
The swans that sail upon its silver streams  
Shall hail thy coming with renewed delight,  
And love the cool waves better for the sight  
That bids them linger near the pleasant shore,  
Without a wish to seek in distant flight  
The mountain lake that seemed so dear before,  
That lovely mountain lake now scarce remembered more

## LXIX.

Deckt with smooth sapphires, rising from the fount,  
A spot beloved by my young bride of old,  
Sacred to rest and pleasure, stands a mount,  
Which a thick plantain-grove belts round with gold.  
E'en now, dark Cloud, as these sad eyes behold  
Thy sombre mass girt by thy lightning's sheen,

' " If the flowers had been her own children, she  
Could never have nursed them more tenderly " ' .

*The Sensitive Plant.*

They see the spot of which my tongue has told  
 Back to my soul comes fresh that glorious scene  
 The plantains circling gold the hillocks velvet green

## LXX.

Sweet clustering trailers and each fairest flower  
 That charms the sense or captivates the eye  
 Give grace and odour to my lady's bower  
 The bright Asoca and the Kesar vie  
 For her caresses as my love walks by  
 That asks the pressure of her foot<sup>1</sup> and this  
 Wild for the joy for which I vainly sigh  
 With me aspiring seeks a higher bliss  
 To touch those perfect lips with a long loving kiss

## LXXI

See on a pedestal of crystal placed  
 A golden column very tall and fair  
 With richest gems like budding caucæ shoots graced  
 Towers o'er the waving trees and gleaming there

<sup>1</sup> I doubt not the flowers of that garden sweet  
 Rejoiced in the sound of her gentle feet.  
*The Sensitive Plant*



The blue-necked peacock drinks the evening air ,  
And when my darling wanders forth alone,  
He tries each art to drive away her care,  
Dispreads his plumes and dances to the tone  
Of the melodious chime made by her tinkling zone

## LXXII

Led by these tokens thou wilt surely know  
The once bright dwelling of my love and me,  
When our glad lives were strangers yet to woe  
But altered now that happy spot may be,  
Since the stern vengeance of my lord's decree  
Has torn me far from all I loved away  
The lotus glories in the sun, but he  
Leaves his sad darling at the close of day  
To mourn with folded blooms the light that made her gay

## LXXIII

Gently descending, on that hillock fall,  
Not in full glory lest that form of thine  
In all its splendour, all its might, appal  
My timid lady    Let thy lightning shine

Like sportive fire-flies in a flashing line  
And to thy friendly eyes my darling show  
She stands within her chamber most divine  
Of all the works of God with rosy glow  
Of lips with teeth of pearl eyes of the startled roe

## LXXIV

O see her silent there my second life  
Like a poor love bird mourning for her mate  
My lonely weeping miserable wife  
Weeping at early morn at evening late  
With bitter tears her banisht husband's fate  
Where hast thou seen a nymph so soft of mould  
So tender loving and disconsolate?  
Sire the sad lady's spirit dwelt of old  
In some frail lotus flower that shrank from rain and cold

## LXXV

See on her hand her faded cheek reclines  
Long hanging tresses veil her drooping head  
Bedimmed with tears her eye no longer shines  
And the bright colour of her lip is fled

For dewy sighs have washed away the red  
Like the cold moon is she, sad, feeble, pale,  
When o'er its face thy pall, dark Cloud, is spread,  
And all the silver beams, imprisoned, fail  
To penetrate the shroud, to pierce the sombre veil

## LXXVI

Now as the sight of thee renews her woe,  
She turns to sacrifice from her wild eyes,  
That picture forth my form, new torrents flow,  
To see my mournful wasted image rise  
Then to her favourite bird she sadly cries  
'Dost thou remember, pet, when thou wast free?  
And is the mate, with whom, from summer skies  
Down sailing, in the well-known roosting tree  
'Twas once thy lot to rest, still dearly loved by thee?'

## LXXVII

Or she will touch her lute with careless grace,  
And with her low soft voice prepare to sing  
Some little ballad of mine ancient race  
But soon the tears that flow from memory's spring

Nor the sweet music of the silver string  
Her thoughts will wander from the cherished lay  
The notes of triumph will no longer ring  
And her melodious voice will die away  
In some wild wailing strain meet for the evil day

## LXXVIII

Then bravely struggling with her dark despair  
She turns away and fondly numbers o'er  
The faded garlands which her pious care  
Times every month that comes above the door  
Counts to the happy day that will restore  
Her husband, and the thought so passing sweet  
Brings light and rapture to her eye once more  
Her bosom swells her pulse wildly beat  
And fancy hears the step of my returning feet

## LXXIX.

These cares by day assuage the mourner's grief  
But Ah! the night brings only woe and pain,  
Be this the season for my love a relief  
Fill then dear Cloud thy soothing voice restrain

And give thine aid when other help is vain  
When all is dark and still float softly near  
The lattice of her chamber, and remain  
To breathe thy message in her sleepless ear,  
And in the weary night my widowed darling cheer

## LXXX

Then on her lonely couch, thin, anguish-worn,  
Watching and weeping still she sadly lies,  
Pale as the waning moon that flies the morn  
When first the sunbeams fire the eastern skies  
She slowly counts 'mid tears and deep-drawn sighs  
The long long weary hours that used to be  
Like moments, praying that the sun may rise  
To chase the lingering night that wont to flee  
Like a quick flash of joy when it was past with me

## LXXXI

But should my love her weary eyehds close,  
Lulled by sweet thoughts and many a hopeful sign,  
Let not thy thunder break her soft repose,  
Nor sudden bid her wreathing arms untwine

Lest in her dreams they should be elapsing mine  
Still let such dreams her aching bosom bless  
Then when the sunbeams on her lattice shine  
With thy deep sounding words the dame address  
And thus my longing love and tender hope express

## LXXXII

O lonely mourner from thy lord I speed  
And to his distant home fond greetings bear  
Tis mine the exile's weary steps to lead  
In safety back to soothe his bride's despair  
Tis mine with thunder rolling through the air  
To wake the sigh for all he left behind  
The well loved cot and wife still weeping there  
And urge his trembling fingers to unhind  
The mourner's braid of hair for his long absence twined

## LXXXIII

Thy faithful lord on Rama's wood-crowned hill  
Mourns the sad lot that severs him from thee  
And in fond fancy he is with thee still  
Though far away by hostile fates decree

Wasted with woe, he seems thy form to see  
Worn, like his own, with tears that ever roll  
From orbs that with his weeping eyes agree .  
He feels the longing of thy kindred soul,  
And counts thy sighs in those his breast can ne'er control

## T XXXIV

He bids me now his loving message speak,  
For far is he from all he holds most dear ,  
But O, what joy, might he but touch thy cheek  
And softly whisper thus into thine ear  
' O peerless creature, in my prison here  
Signs of thy beauty meet me every hour .  
I see the graces of thy form appear  
Faintly reflected in each fairest flower  
That twines her tender shoots around my lonely bower

## T XXXV.

When from my path the startled roedeer run,  
Their eyes, sweet love, thy gentle glance recall  
The peacock's glories, gleaming in the sun,  
Show like thy tresses glittering as they fall

I see thine arching eyebrow in the small  
Ripple upon the brook the moon Ah me !  
Brings back thy pure pale cheek in these in all  
The fairest sights that nature boasts I see  
Faint emblems of the charms that meet in none but thee

## LXXXVI

Oft my love-guided hand essays to paint  
Thy portrait on the rock with mineral dyes,  
And soon as fancy fondly sees a faint  
Resemblance of thy well loved face arise  
I fall upon the ground with eager cries  
Of transport but e'en here an envious veil  
Fate interposes and the vision flies  
Gone is the form I wildly thought to hail  
And dim with blinding tears my loving glances fail

## LXXXVII

The spirits of the grove believe me weep  
As I lie tossing on my lonely bed  
Their pearly tears steal gently down and steep  
The green leaves that o'er canopy my head



As, in a dream of thee, they watch me spread  
My arms, enlacing in their eager strain  
Naught but the yielding an of night instead  
Of that delicious form they would detain .  
Then see me start and sigh and wake to woe again

## LXXXVIII

A welcome herald from my darling comes  
The breeze that from the snowy mountain springs,  
Loaded with fragrance from the oozing gums  
Of pine-buds rifled by its balmy wings  
To me it whispers such delicious things,  
For it may be its breath has fondly played  
Over my lady's bosom, whence it brings  
Diviner fragrance, tenderly has laid  
A kiss upon her lips, and fanned her in the shade

## LXXXIX

But yield not, love, to dark despair, nor think  
That changeless, never ending, is our doom,  
Or in the strife thy gentle soul will sink  
Some friendly stars the moonless night illumine,

Some flowers of hope amid the desert bloom  
 Life has no perfect good no endless ill  
 No constant brightness no perpetual gloom  
 But circling as a wheel and never still  
 Now down and now above all must their fate fulfil

## XC

Four months remain and when that ago is fled  
 Then ends my banishment and all our pain  
 When Vishnu rises from his serpent bed<sup>1</sup>  
 Where lapt in sleep the Bow armed God has lain  
 Thy lover speeds to home and thee again  
 The moon of autumn with serener glow  
 His silver influence on our nights shall rain  
 And our rapt souls with joy shall overflow  
 More exquisitely sweet for all remembered woe

<sup>1</sup> The serpent couch is the great snake Ananta upon which Vishnu or as he is here called the Hildr of the bow Sarnga (the horn bow) reclines during four months from the 11th of Asharha to the 11th of Kartik or as it has occurred in 1813 from the 23d of June to the 26th of October. The sleep of Vishnu during the four months of the periodical rains in Hindustan seems to bear an emblematical relation to that season. It has been compared to the Egyptian hieroglyphical account of the sleep of Ho us typical of the annual verflow of the Nil by the late Mr Paterson in his interesting Essay on the Origin of the Hindu Religion Asiatic Researches vol. viii H. H. WILSON

## XCI

Once more I see thee, but no more alone,  
Thy senses steeped in dews of slumber, lie,  
With thy fond arms around thy husband thrown  
Thou startest weeping, and I ask thee why  
Thy soul is troubled when thy lord is nigh  
'Traitor,' thou sayest, as a smile and tear  
Plays on thy lip and glistens in thine eye,  
'Faithless I saw thee in my dream appear,  
Whispering tales of love into another's ear'

## XCII

'But, dark-eyed beauty, rest thou ever sure  
That, with a constancy that naught shall bend,  
Through woe and absence shall my faith endure  
To slanderous tales forbear thine ear to lend  
Store in thy heart the message which I send,  
And soothe thee with the trust that love like mine  
Will live unchanging on till time shall end,  
Burn with a flame that ne'er shall know decline,  
But, fed with hope, each day shall yet more brightly shine.'

## XCHH

Wilt thou dear Cloud through regions far away  
This loving message to my darling bear ?  
Silent art thou yet not in vain I pray  
For when the Rain birds in the sultry air  
Crave the cool shower of thee thou dost not care  
To speak in answer but sweet drops descend  
And their faint strength and flagging wings repair  
So comes the aid the good delight to lend  
Deeming the granted wish best answer to a friend

## XCV

Thus faithful herald having cheered her heart  
Who mourns in joyless solitude her fate  
From the high forehead of that hill depart  
Where the celestial Ball who bears the weight  
Of Siva rends the rock with joy elate  
Return to me and let my spirit know  
Some comfort hearing of my darlings state  
Ere my soul sink beneath its weight of woe  
Like a frail jasmine bud scorcht by the summer's glow

## XCV

So shall my thanks repay thy gentle deed,  
And evermore my blessings follow thee  
So by the breezes wafted, shalt thou speed  
To pleasant regions where thou fain wouldst be,  
There rest delighted or there wander free ,  
May the sweet rain ne'er fail thee , and thy bride,  
The splendid lightning, mayst thou ever see  
Close to thyself in dazzling beauty ride,  
Flashing upon thy breast or sporting at thy side '

## XCVI

'The mourner ceased , the airy envoy heard ,  
And the fond speech, by love made eloquent,  
Kuvera's breast with soft compassion stirred  
His ear in mercy to the tale he bent  
That led his yielding spirit to relent,  
And made him, ere the term was nigh, restore  
The exile languishing in banishment,  
And freely bade him, all his trials o'er,  
Live with his love again with joy for evermore

## THE SUPPLIANT DOVE

Chased by a hawk there came a dove  
     With worn and weary wing  
 And took her stand upon the hand  
     Of Kasi's noble king  
 The monarch smoothed her ruffled plumes  
     And laid her on his breast  
 And cried   No fear shall vex thee here  
     Rest pretty egg born nest!  
 Fair Kasi's realm is rich and wide  
     With golden harvests gay  
 But all that's mine will I resign  
     Ere I my guest betray

But, panting for his half-won spoil,  
The hawk was close behind,  
And with wild eye and eager cry  
Came swooping down the wind  
'This bird,' he cried, 'my destined prize,  
'Tis not for thee to shield  
'Tis mine by right and toilsome flight  
O'er hill and dale and field  
Hunger and thirst oppress me sore,  
And I am faint with toil  
Thou shouldst not stay a bird of prey  
Who claims his rightful spoil  
They say thou art a glorious king,  
And justice is thy care  
Then justly reign in thy domain,  
Nor rob the birds of air'  
Then cried the king 'A cow' or deer  
For thee shall straightway bleed,  
Or let a ram or tender lamb  
Be slain, for thee to feed

<sup>1</sup> I have retained the cow at the risk of hurting the feelings of some sensitive Hindus. This apologue was composed before the cow was sacred.

Mine oath forbids me to betray  
    My little twice born guest  
See how she clings with trembling wings  
    To her protector's breast  
No flesh of lambs the hawk replied  
    No blood of deer for me  
The falcon loves to feed on doves  
    And such is Heaven's decree  
But if affection for the dove  
    Thy pitying heart has stirred  
Let thine own flesh my maw refresh  
    Weighed down against the bird  
He carved the flesh from off his side  
    And threw it in the scale  
While women's cries smote on the skies  
    With loud lament and wail  
He hatched the flesh from side and arm  
    From chest and back and thigh  
But still above the little dove  
    The monarch's scale stood high  
He heaped the scale with piles of flesh  
    With sinews, blood and skin



And when alone was left him bone  
    He threw himself therein  
Then thundered voices through the air ,  
    The sky grew black as night ,  
And fever took the earth that shook  
    To see that wondrous sight  
The blessed Gods, from every sphere,  
    By India led, came nigh ,  
While drum and flute and shell and lute  
    Made music in the sky  
They rained immortal chaplets down,  
    Which hands celestial twine,  
And softly shed upon his head  
    Pure Amrit, drink divine  
Then God and Seraph, Bard and Nymph  
    Their heavenly voices raised,  
And a glad throng with dance and song  
    The glorious monarch praised  
They set him on a golden car  
    That blazed with many a gem ,  
Then swiftly through the air they flew,  
    And bore him home with them



## THE DESCENT OF GANGA.

He stood upon the lofty crest  
     That crowns the Lord of Snow,  
 And bade the river of the Blest  
     Descend on earth below  
 Himalaya's child, adored of all,  
     The haughty mandate heard  
 And her proud bosom at the call  
     With furious wrath was stirred  
 Down from her channel in the skies  
     With awful might she sped,  
 In a giant's rush, in a giant's size,  
     On Siva's holy head

He call me in her wrath she cried  
And all my flood shall sweep  
And whirl him in its whelming tide  
To hell's profounde & deep  
He held the river on his head  
And kept her wandering where  
Dense as Himalaya's woods were pread  
The tangles of his hair  
No way to earth she found ashamed  
Though long and sore she strove  
Condemned until her pride were tamed  
Amid his locks to rove  
At length when many a year had past  
He bade her wanderings end  
Bade the delighted flood at last  
Upon the earth descend  
With deafening roar upon the rock  
Down sped the heavenly tide  
And earth who trembled at the shock  
With nollow voice replied  
On conotless glittering scales the beam  
Of rosy morning flushed

Where fish and dolphins in the stream,  
    Fallen and falling, dashed  
Then Bards who chant celestial lays,  
    And Nymphs of heavenly birth,  
Flocked round upon the flood to gaze  
    That streamed from sky to earth  
The Gods themselves from every sphere,  
    Incomparably bright,  
Boone in their golden cars drew near  
    To see the wondrous sight  
The cloudless sky was all aflame  
    With the light of a hundred suns,  
Where'er the shining chariots came  
    That bore those holy ones  
So flashed the air with crested snakes  
    And fish of every hue,  
As when the lightning's glory breaks  
    Through fields of summer blue  
And white foam-clouds and silver spray  
    Were wildly tossed on high,  
Like swans that urge their homeward way  
    Across the autumn sky

Now flowed the river calm and clear

With current deep and strong

Now slowly broadened to a mere

Or scarcely moved along

Now o'er a length of sandy plain

Her tranquil course she held

Now rose her waves and sank again

By reflux waves repelled

## TARA'S LAMENT.

Tara, widowed of her spouse,  
 Kissed him on the cheek and brows ,  
 O'er her fallen hero bent,  
 Called him with this wild lament  
 'Still, my lord, without reply ?  
 Is the earth more loved than I,  
 That thou choosest to recline  
 On her breast, forsaking mine ?  
 Lord and keeper, good and brave,  
 Sage to guide and strong to save,  
 See, thy chiefs, a mournful ring,  
 Wait around their silent king

Wilt thou still be stern and mute?  
Must they miss thy kind salute?  
Dearest when the morning's red  
Calls thee from thy royal bed  
Is thy wont to welcome each  
With a gift or pleasant speech  
Must thy lords unheeded stay?  
Will thou not arise to day?  
Wilt thou not awake from sleep  
While thy friends round thee weep?  
Look thy child before thee stands  
Lifts to thee his little hands  
Wilt thou silent yet despise  
That appeal of wistful eyes?

Ah! my love is dead is dead  
Look ye how his wounds have bled  
How the crimson torrents make  
Round his limbs a rising lake  
Death my child has hurried hence  
Him who was our sure defence  
Come and look on him who thus



Slain in fight has gone from us  
Kiss thy sue and say farewell ' '

Came the little child and fell  
On his knees and fondly pressed  
Those cold feet with arm and breast .  
' Here is Angada,' he cried ,  
' Father, speak ' but none replied

Weeping, as her child she viewed,  
Tara thus her plaint renewed  
' Hast thou not a word not one  
Father, for thy darling son ?  
Canst thou still and silent lie,  
Hear him call, and not reply ?  
Husband, by thy bloody bed  
Thus I sit and mourn thee dead ,  
Like some mother of the herd,  
By the lion undeterred,  
Mourning in the grassy dell  
Where her lord and leader fell '

## TRUE GLORY

To whom is glory justly due ?  
 To those who pride and hate subdue  
 Who mid the joys that lure the sense  
 Lead lives of holy abstinence  
 Who when reviled their tongues restrain  
 And injured injure not again  
 Who ask of none but freely give  
 Most liberal to all that live  
 Who toil unresting through the day  
 Their parents joy and hope and stay  
 Who welcome to their homes the guest  
 And banish envy from their breast  
 With reverent study love to pore  
 On precepts of our sacred lore  
 Who work not speak not think not sin  
 In body pure and pure within  
 Whom avarice can ne'er mislead

To guilty thought or sinful deed ,  
Whose fancy never seeks to roam  
From the dear wives who cheer their home ,  
Whose hero souls cast fear away  
When battling in a rightful fray ,  
Who speak the truth with dying breath  
Undaunted by approaching death,  
Their lives illumed with beacon light  
To guide their brothers' steps aright  
Who loving all, to all endeared,  
Fearless of all by none are feared ,  
To whom the world with all therein,  
Dear as themselves, is more than kin ,  
Who yield to others, wisely meek,  
The honours which they scorn to seek ,  
Who toil that rage and hate may cease  
And lure embittered foes to peace ,  
Who serve their God, the laws obey,  
And earnest, faithful, work and pray ,  
To these, the bounteous, pure, and true,  
Is highest glory justly due

*Mahabharat.*

## INGRATITUDE

O Monarch hear with mind and ear

The words that Brahma spake

The thankless man lives under ban

Who will his life may take

Man for all sin may pardon win

How deep soe'er the guilt

Yea for the stain of Brahman slain

Whoso blood must ne'er be spilt

Slave to the bowl that kills the soul

He turns and gains relief

The liar yet may pardon get

The perjured and the thief

But never can the thankless man  
Be pardoned for his crime  
Disgrace and shame shall hunt his name  
Through life and endless time  
When, reft of friends, his days he ends  
In profitless remorse,  
E'en beasts of prey shall turn away  
And scorn his loathed corpse '

FEED THE POOR

---

If thou would win the dear reward  
Which only virtue earns  
Waste not thy wealth upon the lord  
Who gift for gift returns  
Not with the rich thy treasures share  
Give aid to those who need  
And with the gold thy wants can spare  
The poor and hungry feed  
Be sure that those who would receive  
Deserve and crave thy care  
And ponder ere thy hands relieve  
The how and when and where

## THE WISE SCHOLAR.

I hold that scholar truly wise  
 Who schools his heart and lips and eye's  
 Who can as worthless clay behold  
 The treasures of another's gold .  
 Who looks upon his neighbour's wife  
 As upon her who gave him life  
 Who feels as for himself for all  
 That live on earth, both great and sma<sup>ll</sup>

THE END

BY THE SAME

*SPECIMENS OF OLD INDIAN POETRY* Translated from the original Sanskrit into English verse

*THE BIRTH OF THE WAR GOD* A poem by Kálidasa (Kumára-Sambhava) Translated into English verse

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